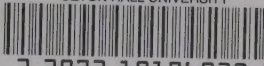
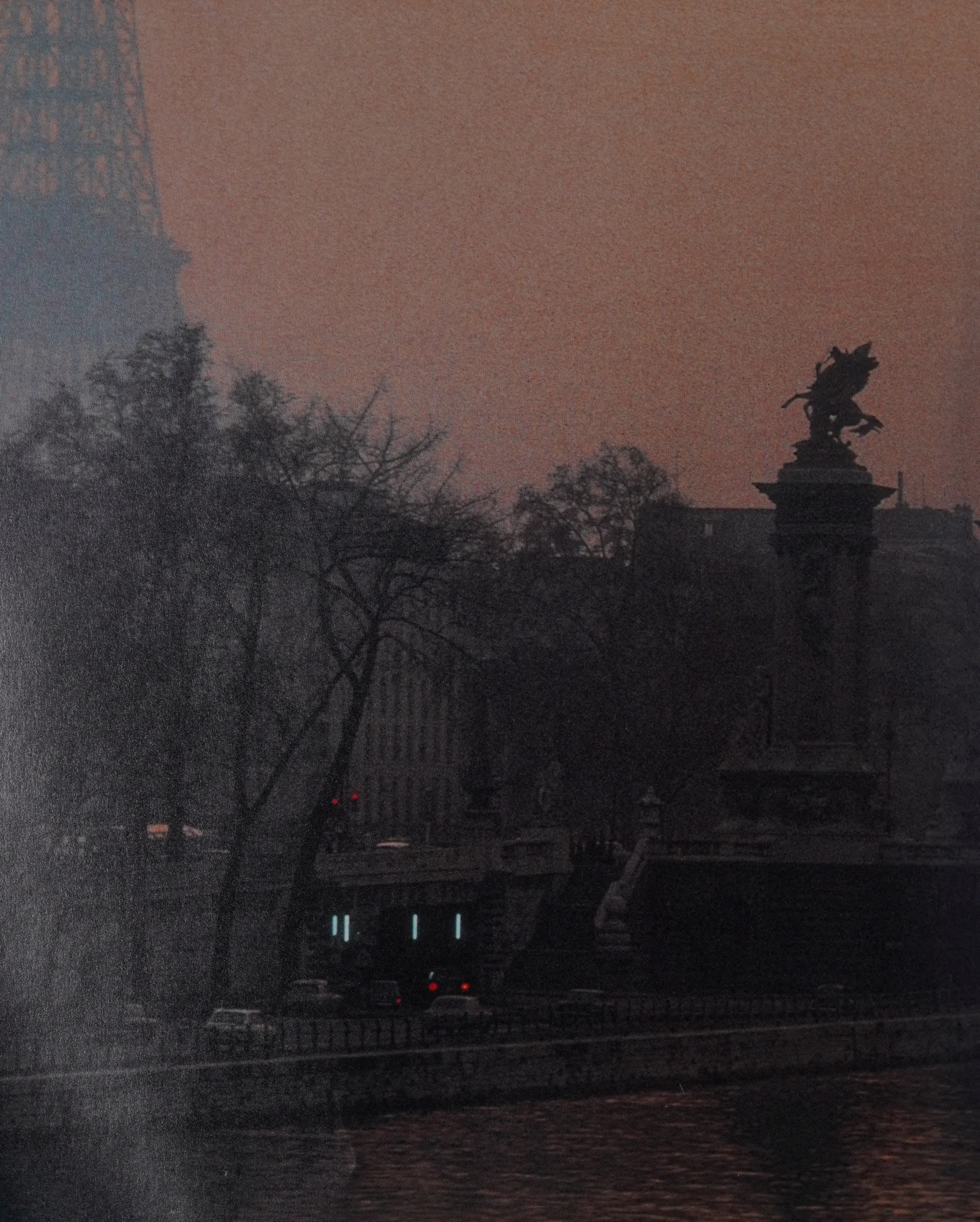




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THE ART AND
SPIRIT OF
PARIS

VOLUME II

Michel Laclotte

EDITORIAL DIRECTOR

ABBEVILLE PRESS PUBLISHERS

NEW YORK LONDON

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Publisher's Note

I first visited Paris with my family in 1948, when I was five years old, then again in 1953. Those visits are forever imprinted on my being.

This book was created to honor that city whose spirit and unapologetically self-conscious dedication to the arts, in all facets of its life and history, have given the world the concept and the reality of *l'art de vivre*.

—Robert E. Abrams

General Editor: Christopher Lyon
Design: Freeform Studio, Inc.
Production Manager: Louise Kurtz
Production Editors: Sarah Nitterauer, Laura Tepper
French editorial coordinator: Marike Gauthier
Photographic researchers: Lisa Barnett, Elizabeth Boyle, Robin Raffer

Slipcase:
Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841–1919)
Detail, *Dancing at the Moulin de la Galette*, 1876
Oil on canvas, 51 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 70 in. (131 x 175 cm)
Musée d'Orsay
(see FIG. 6.130)

Front cover:
Claude Monet (1840–1926)
Rue Saint-Denis, 30th of June, 1878
Oil on canvas, 30 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 20 $\frac{13}{16}$ in. (76 x 52 cm)
Musée des Beaux Arts, Rouen
(see FIG. 6.116)

Copyeditors: Ashley Benning, Mary Christian, Miranda Ottewell
Principal translators (French to English): John Goodman (chapters 2, 3) and Jeanine Herman (chapter 9); (English to French): Marc Phéline

Frontispiece:
Burt Glinn (b. 1925)
The Left Bank of the Seine just at dusk with the red ball of the sun setting, 1969

Pages 898–899:
Inge Morath (1923–2002)
View from the cathedral of Notre-Dame-de-Paris with the Eiffel Tower in the background, 1954

Library of Congress Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

The art and spirit of Paris / essays by Michel Laclotte... [et al.]—1st ed.
p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 1-55859-760-3 (alk. paper)

1. Arts, French—Paris—France. I. Laclotte, Michel, 1929–

NX549.P2A75 2003

720'.944'361—dc21

2003049644

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Printed and bound in Japan.

First edition

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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6. 1 (above)
 Gustave Le Gray (1820–1882)
 Panorama of Paris, n.d.
 Musée D'Orsay

6.76 (gatefold)
 Gustave Caillebotte (1848–1894)
Paris Street: Rainy Day, 1876/77 (detail)
 Oil on canvas, 84 $\frac{1}{6}$ x 110 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (212.2 x 276.2 cm)
 The Art Institute of Chicago; Charles H. and
 Mary F. S. Worcester Collection

Happy of heart I climbed the hill
To contemplate the town in its enormity,
Brothel and hospital, prison, purgatory, hell,
Monstrosities flowering like a flower.

But you, O Satan, patron of my pain,
Know I went not to weep for them in vain.
But like an old lecher to old mistress goes,
Seeking but rapture, I sought out this trull
Immense, whose hellish charm resuscitates.
Whether in morning sheets you lie asleep,
Hidden and heavy with a cold, or flaunt
Through night in golden spangled veils,

Infamous City, I adore you! Courtesans
And bandits, you offer me such joys,
The common herd can never understand.

— CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, 1869

Translated by Louise Varèse

THE SECOND EMPIRE

1852-1870

Gary Tinterow



NAPOLEON III AND HIS COURT

With Louis-Philippe, something disappeared which we will not see again.
Now we must dance to a different tune.

—GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, Letter to Louis Bouilhet,
September 4, 1850

Paris became Paris during the Second Empire. Modern Paris was born with the revolution of 1848, baptized by the coup d'état of December 2, 1851, and came of age in the Third Republic. The rise to power of Napoleon Bonaparte's nephew, Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, though bloodless, was far more convulsive than it first appeared. More than a simple imposition of a new (but old) ruling house, Bonaparte, over the previous (and much older) house of Orléans, more than a substitution of ministers from one party by those of another, more than the assertion of a new ruler's preferences over those of the old, the advent of Louis-Napoleon brought in its train a set of forces that, among other things, transformed Paris from a crumbling, crowded, unsanitary city into the glorious metropolis of broad and brightly lit boulevards, glittering palaces, and spacious parks that we recognize today. He also destroyed much of the shadowy Paris of old, replacing entire districts of the medieval and baroque city seen in the etchings of Charles Meryon (see FIGS. 6.68 and 6.69), beloved of Victor Hugo, Eugène Delacroix, and Charles Baudelaire, with the new Paris inhabited by the Goncourts, photographed by Charles Marville and Edouard Baldus, and painted by Edouard Manet, Claude Monet, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. Ever the political strategist, he placed arsenals as well as railroad stations on his new thoroughfares, instituted strict political censorship at the beginning of his regime, and severely restricted public assembly. Louis-Napoleon did not want anyone else to rise to power by the same means as he.

Even more remarkable for an emperor who studiously avoided aesthetic pronouncements, Louis-Napoleon actually set the stage for the creation of what we now call modern art. Guided by his chief adviser, comte de Nieuwerkerke, and his own dogged policy of indifference, despised by the entrenched (and Orléanist) powers in the academies, he ensured that almost all

schools of art—Classical, Romantic, Realist, and Idealist (but not Impressionist)—were favored more or less equally by the government, which continued to be, though not for long, the primary patron in France. By creating, through personal decree, the Salon des Refusés in 1863, he unwittingly legitimized opposition to the government-run juries, providing a model for the “protest” pavilions established by Gustave Courbet and Manet and the alternative exhibition societies established by the Impressionist and Postimpressionist artists. The industrial arts flourished under his self-promoting slogan “L'Empire c'est la paix,” and they were showcased in spectacular expositions—the World's Fairs of 1855 and 1867—meant to demonstrate the superiority and wide variety of industry and art produced in France, and to stimulate painters, sculptors, architects, and photographers. Under Louis-Napoleon, Paris became the crucible of modern art, the laboratory of photography, the studio of the New Painting, the foundry of Auguste Rodin, the center of world fashion, the school for world architecture. It maintained that position for nearly one hundred years, from Manet to Matisse, from the fall of the Second Empire in 1870 to the creation of the Fourth Republic in 1946.

The Imperial Household

Louis-Napoleon (1808–1873) was the third son of Emperor Napoleon's brother, Louis Bonaparte, king of Holland, and Hortense Beauharnais, the daughter of Napoleon's first wife, Empress Josephine, by her first marriage. The marriage of Louis and Hortense was said to be loveless, and their son was hounded by rumors that he was not the son of his father. Victor Hugo, exiled by Louis-Napoleon for his socialist views, quipped that he was “the child of chance whose name was stolen and whose birth was fake.”¹ Banned from entering

6.2 (opposite)
Hippolyte Flandrin
(1809–1864)
Emperor Napoleon III,
1860–62
Oil on canvas,
83½ x 57¾ in.
(212 x 147 cm)
Châteaux-musées de
Versailles et de Trianon



6.3
 Franz Xaver Winterhalter
 (1805–1873)
*Empress Eugénie and
 Her Ladies-in-Waiting*,
 1855
 Oil on canvas,
 120 x 168 in.
 (300 x 420 cm)
 Musée National du
 Château de Compiègne

France, as were all Bonapartes in 1816 and again in 1830, Louis-Napoleon was raised by his mother on the Swiss shore of Lake Constance, where he attended a military academy. Eager for action, he moved to Italy to fight in the wars to liberate the peninsula from papal domination. A brief trip to Paris in the 1830s persuaded him that the shadow of Napoleon still cast magic over France, despite the popularity of King Louis-Philippe. He wrote several pamphlets, from *Rêveries politiques* to *Idées Napoléoniennes*, in which he put forth rather vague notions of a new empire, supported by industry rather than the military, that would synthesize revolution and liberty (while prohibiting both). Sensing opportunity when Louis-Philippe, conceding to popular sentiment, returned the ashes of Napoleon I to France, and smelling

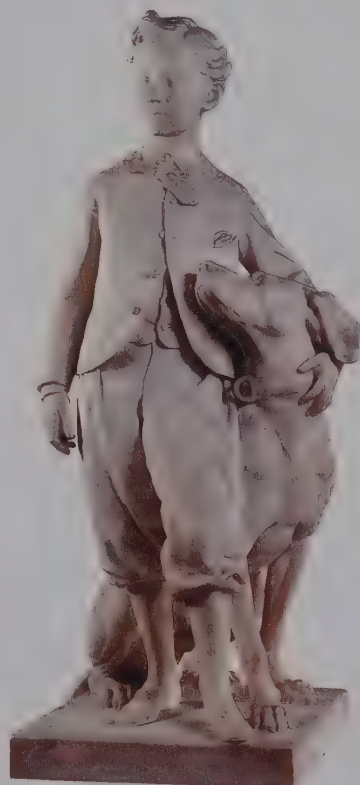
weakness during a recession, Louis-Napoleon attempted to rally a military takeover in 1840—his second attempt, having failed in 1836 to raise the Strasbourg garrison. He again failed miserably and was imprisoned. Five and a half years later he escaped. After the revolution of 1848 and the establishment of the Second Republic, he ran for office. To the amazement of France's political elite, he won in four departments and was quickly buoyed to power by a wave of Napoleonic nostalgia for empire: first as president of the Republic, elected to a four-year term on December 10, 1848; then as prince-president after the coup d'état of December 2, 1851 (the anniversary of Napoleon's victory at Austerlitz and of his coronation in 1804), ratified by the new constitution to a ten-year term on January 14, 1852; then as emperor,

approved by plebiscite on November 21–22, 1852 (7,824,129 for, only 253,149 against). The key to his success was universal male suffrage, instituted by the Second Republic. Overnight the electorate grew from about 250,000 (primarily aristocrats and owners of property) to nearly 9 million (mainly rural peasants who greatly outnumbered the urban proletariat). The peasants associated Bonapartism with glory and low taxes: they were the group that brought Louis-Napoleon to power. But when left-wing agitators fomented discontent after the 1851 coup d'état, the prince-president quickly arrested more than 25,000 individuals, of which some 10,000 were deported. As he was said to remark, "I am prepared to be baptized with the waters of universal suffrage, but I do not intend to live with my feet in the puddle."²

In the first official portrait of the emperor, commissioned in 1853 but not completed until 1862, Louis-Napoleon recalled Napoleonic prototypes in order to establish links to his uncle (FIG. 6.2). Rejecting the ermine robes and regalia of the portraits of the defunct Bourbon and Orléans monarchs, Louis-Napoleon shows himself just as Napoleon Bonaparte did in his late official portraits (see FIG. 5.4): with one hand on his sword and the other on a table for signing documents, he is a military man who rules not by divine right but by the rule of law and the consent of the people. The critic Théophile Gautier immediately declared that Hippolyte Flandrin's portrait was "assuredly the first 'true' portrait we have seen of his Majesty,"³ no doubt the reason that His Majesty did not like it. Gustave Geffroy explained, "Everything serves to make this work a profound, tragic portrait (and a very real one, without useless artifice or magical lighting) of a second-rate adventurer, a contemplative sociologist, an emperor of the coup-d'état and the political ambush."⁴

Having established himself as emperor, Louis-Napoleon found an empress, Eugenia Palafox de Montijo, countess of Teba, whom he married in January 1853. He then established a household that would rival in splendor that of his namesake. Though he lacked his uncle's curiosity and intellectual prowess, and Eugenia, called Eugénie in France, had none of Josephine's cultural sophistication, they created a climate of conspicuous consumption that outshone every other court in Europe. Compelled by her husband to wear silks from Lyons,

Eugénie ordered voluminous dresses that reflected her peculiar fascination with Queen Marie-Antoinette. Franz Xavier Winterhalter, the preferred portraitist of European aristocracy, presented her as an incarnation of that unlucky queen, powdered hair and all. The Goncourts recalled how she was ridiculed for this by princess Mathilde, Louis-Napoleon's cousin (to whom he was once engaged): "And this cult for Marie-Antoinette! It is absolutely mad, ridiculous, indecent! Do you know what she keeps in her private room? The bust in Sèvres of Marie-Antoinette, a portrait of the Dauphin and, on the table, a volume of *L'Histoire de Marie-Antoinette*, which 'we' never read, since she never reads anything, occupying herself with nothing."⁵ Nevertheless, her entire court soon adopted the eighteenth-century revival, as witness the group portrait she commissioned from Winterhalter, *The Empress Eugénie and Her Ladies-In-Waiting* (FIG. 6.3). It was ridiculed when it was shown at the Exposition Universelle of 1855. "Detestable," said the distinguished savant Prosper Mérimée, himself an old friend of Eugénie's mother, "but nothing must be said about it in court. It is a troop of tarts in a garden,



6.4

Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux
(1827–1875)

*The Prince Imperial and
His Dog, Nero*, 1865

Marble, 55 x 25⁵/₈ x 24 in.
(140 x 65 x 61 cm)

Musée d'Orsay



6.5

Jean-Auguste-Dominic
Ingres (1780-1867)

*Portrait of Madame
Montessier, 1856*

Oil on canvas,
47 1/4 x 36 1/4 in.
(120 x 92.1 cm)
National Gallery,
London

all dolled up, with little affected looks. It could be used as a dance hall signboard for the Bal Mabille.”⁶ Eugénie also reminded the Goncourts of that popular dance hall: “The woman is charming after all. She has eyes which seem only to smile, grace and prettiness of gesture, and indescribable loveliness in the way she passes before you. Neither a queen nor a princess,—an empress of others, not the French, perhaps of some fairy place such as Baden. If you wish, Marie Antoinette at the Mabille.”⁷ Dancing was, after all, important, as Empress Eugénie explained to Prosper Mérimée: “I do not want to see any old faces around here. We must have a gay and youthful house. If you want to be received here you will have to know how to dance.”⁸

An ardent and pious Catholic, the empress bore only one child, the prince-imperial Napoleon-Eugène (1856–1879). One hundred and one salvos were fired from the Invalides to announce his birth, and he was doted upon by father, mother, and his English governess. He would grow up to be the only Bonaparte to die in battle (with the British against the Zulus in South Africa). Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux had hoped that his charming sculpture of the handsome and well-loved boy with his dog (FIG. 6.4) would make him rich, but it did not; in 1869 he and his brother, who collaborated in the venture, sold the government their rights to edition the work.⁹

Les Grandes Horizontales

Eugénie must have had extraordinary patience, for she endured the illegitimate sons her husband sired prior to their marriage as well as the “petites impératrices” after her marriage: the comtesse Castiglione, Maria Anna Walewska, and Marguerite Bellanger, in whose arms the emperor suffered a small heart attack during an “interview.”¹⁰ Unlike previous French monarchs, Napoleon III did not give his mistresses official rank at court, but his philandering, keenly noted by all levels of society, reflected established custom. Rare was the aristocrat or arriviste who did not consort with women other than his wife. Illicit sex and prostitution became a prominent, and at times the dominant, theme of literature and visual arts in the Second Empire—one need only mention Dumas fils’s *La Dame aux Camilles* (1852)

transformed by Giuseppe Verdi into *La Traviata* (1853), or Flaubert’s *Madame Bovary* (1857)—and surveillance and regulation of prostitutes became an obsession of the police. Charles Bernheimer has recently demonstrated the disturbing parallel made in the studies of a public health officer, Alexandre Parent-Duchâlet, between the establishment of sewers and the regulation of prostitutes, who, in his misogynist mind, were another kind of vehicle for filth.¹¹ Both, he felt, were necessary for a healthy society, but prostitutes, like sewers, should be hidden from view. Although prostitution was illegal in France throughout the nineteenth century, it was officially tolerated. With the huge growth in the French economy under Louis-Napoleon, fueled by new credit mechanisms, came a growth in the number of prostitutes, kept women, and courtesans in the capital.¹² Most, of course, were miserable and poor. But as a select few of these women grew wealthy, thanks to generous admirers, their houses, carriages, costumes and jewelry began to rival those of the richest and most distinguished families in France. The *grandes horizontales*, as these women were wickedly known, did not hide themselves; they flaunted their wealth and power and thus were thought to pose a destabilizing threat to social order, precisely because they operated quite visibly in a world that had, ostensibly, ostracized them. Like actresses, to whom they were often compared, they became celebrities. Even worse, according to comtesse Stéphanie de Tascher de la Pagerie, daughter of Empress Eugénie’s lord chamberlain (and a distant relative of Empress Josephine), the courtesans became taste makers: women from good families began to imitate courtesans. “Well-bred women do not amuse men. To attract men, women of the uppermost classes stoop to imitating ladies of easy virtue. The result is the appearance of the *cocodézes* and the *cocodettes*, the *blasés* and the *crevés*, *cocottes* with coats of arms, *lions* and *lionnes*, the *gommeux* and the *gomme* and I do not know what else!”¹³ Even the august Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres succumbed to the new fashion. His portraits of the vicomtesse d’Haussonville (see FIG. 5.150), the baronne de Rothschild (1848; private collection), and the princess de Broglie (1851; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York)—all aristocrats—are models of propriety and restraint. But when he finally completed in 1856 the seated portrait of Mme Paul-Sigisbert

Moitessier (FIG. 6.5), he depicted this young wife of a wealthy cigar importer in a gaudy dress, covered in new jewelry, seated in an ostentatious decor appropriate to a *grande horizontale*. Although Mme Moitessier was eminently respectable—her father descended in a long line of *hauts fonctionnaires*, and her mother's family were lace merchants—she has unwittingly assumed the attributes of a courtesan.

Virginia Oldoini, contessa di Castiglione (1837–1899), was the most interesting courtesan in the emperor's circle. Born to aristocratic parents (and a cousin of the Italian diplomat count Cavour), she brought her great beauty to the attention of King Vittorio Emanuele II

of Piedmont and Sardinia while she was still in her teens. Knowing precisely how effective her charms were, the king induced her to move to Paris with husband and child to ensnare Napoleon III prior to the Congress of Paris. Vittorio Emanuele hoped that the congress, which opened in February 1856 to resolve the aftermath of the Crimean War, could be used to advance the cause of Italian unification. Castiglione was introduced to the emperor on January 9, 1856, at princess Mathilde's ball, by Mathilde's good friend, the countess Walewska. (Walewska, an Italian beauty married to the minister of foreign affairs—himself the illegitimate son of Napoleon I—had been a “favorite” of the emperor for the previous three years.) By summer the affair was in full heat. At an imperial picnic, the emperor and Castiglione rowed out to an island and did not reappear for several hours, leaving the empress pale with rage. Castiglione advertised her triumph when she appeared at a masked ball in February 1857 dressed as the Queen of Hearts. Princess Mathilde later told the Goncourts that Castiglione received a monthly stipend of 40,000 francs from the emperor and actually approached the empress to have her 60,000-franc bill at the dressmaker paid.¹⁴ Her downfall came quickly. On April 6, 1857, an Italian assassin made an attempt on the emperor as he was leaving Castiglione's apartment on the avenue Montaigne at three o'clock in the morning. Though innocent, she was immediately implicated in the plot against her lover. Her husband sued for divorce, and the countess, barely twenty years old, retired to Turin with her son. (France did intervene on behalf of Piedmont against Austria in 1859, and Castiglione felt that she never received proper recognition for her sexual diplomacy.) She returned to Paris in 1861 and embarked on a succession of affairs. Somehow she was rehabilitated. For her reappearance at court, she dressed as the queen of Etruria at a masked ball at the Tuileries in February 1863 (FIG. 6.6). The loosely fitted antique-style tunic, worn without a corset and with sandaled feet, provoked the scandal that Castiglione carefully anticipated. Branded by her peers as an adventuress, she decided to cultivate a provocative image to outrage conventional society. She became a kind of actress who turned every appearance into a theatrical event. With her seamstress, Mme Roger, she created extraordinary costumes that,



6.6

Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse (1824–1887)

The Comtesse de Castiglione as Queen of Etruria, 1864

Patinated plaster,
28 1/4 x 11 1/4 x 12 3/8 in.
(72 x 30 x 32 cm)

Musée National du
Château de Compiègne



through exaggeration, became parodies of fashion. Her “queen of Etruria” capitalized on the new vogue for Etruscan-style jewelry and alluded to her liaison with the king of Italy. Her “Elvira” costume (she named all of her outfits, this one in reference to Verdi’s opera *Ernani*) took the Empress Eugénie’s revival of Marie-Antoinette’s great skirts to a new, ridiculous extreme (FIG. 6.7).

Throughout the 1860s Castiglione collaborated with the photographer Pierre-Louis Pierson to record her various guises, making, first by accident and then by design, some of the most remarkable portraits of the Second Empire.¹⁵ As she became more comfortable in the studio, she began to reveal the disturbing psychology that animated her. Convinced that she was “the most beautiful woman of the century,” she made a cult of her body. She demonstrated, for example, a fetishistic interest in her feet. Numerous photographs show her baring her legs (FIG. 6.8), in opposition to all conventions of propriety, and she even had casts made of her feet. Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse’s statuette of Castiglione as the queen of Etruria carefully displays the open sandals that caused such a commotion at the Tuileries. “Had she been simple and natural, she would have unsettled the universe,” remarked princess Metternich.¹⁶ Instead, she unsettled herself. She remained in Paris for the rest of the century, her circumstances increasingly

reduced until her final days, spent half-mad in a darkened apartment from which sun and mirrors had been banished and which was crammed with souvenirs from the past, including her dead dogs, stuffed with straw.

Castiglione bankrupted herself with extravagant



6.7

Pierre-Louis Pierson
(1822–1913)

Elvira (Countess
Castiglione (1835–1899)
with a Fan), c. 1860

Gelatin silver print,
14¼ x 16⅞ in.

(36.8 x 41.6 cm)

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New
York; David Hunter
McAlpin Fund, 1947

6.8

Pierre-Louis Pierson
(1850–1937)

*Comtesse Véra de
Castiglione, née
Virginia Oldoini,
Seated on a Table*, 1863

Gelatin-silver print,
enlarged and printed
c. 1900, 13¾ x 10⅞ in.
(35 x 27 cm)

Musée d’Orsay



6.9

Auguste Clésinger
(1814–1883)

*Woman Bitten by a
Serpent*, 1847

Marble,

22 ³/₁₆ x 70 ¹/₁₆ x 27 ⁷/₁₆ in.

(56.5 x 180 x 70 cm)

Musée d'Orsay

clothes and jewels. The woman known as La Païva spent her fortune on one of the most lavish houses in Paris. Born in Russia about 1819, Esther Lackmann, whose parents were Polish Jews, led a gallant life in Constantinople, Paris, and London, marrying several times before she wed the marquis de Païva in 1851. That year he bought her a parcel of land at 25 avenue des Champs Elysées. Two years later he returned to Portugal, ruined. It was her next lover, count Henckel von Donnersmarck, one of the richest men in Germany, who paid for the magnificent Hôtel Païva, nicknamed “Hôtel qui paye y va,” constructed between 1856 and 1866. Architect Pierre Manguin called upon some of the best sculptors of the day, such as Barias and Jules Dalou, and decorative painters, such as Paul Baudry (who would go on to collaborate on Garnier’s Opéra), to create a splendid neo-Renaissance palace that, despite the heavy ornamentation, only rarely descends to kitsch. If the pièce de résistance—a circular staircase worked in a bewildering array of onyx (FIGS. 6.10)—is too gaudy, the mantels and ceilings, by contrast, exhibit a remarkable harmony of material and design. In its giddy eclecticism—a Turkish bathroom, a Gothic bedroom—the Hôtel Païva embodies Second Empire style even if it lacks the kind of ideological program that informed state projects such as the new Louvre and the Opéra. But in quality of execution, it is the equal of the most prestigious architectural endeavors of the period, testimony both to the competence fostered at the Ecole

des Beaux-Arts and the various trade schools and to the allure of working for one of the eminent courtesans of Paris.

The celebrity of luxury-loving femmes fatales like la Castiglione and la Païva, and of actresses like the divine Sarah Bernhardt (FIG. 6.11), was too great a temptation for artists to ignore. The primary aim of any artist who exhibited publicly was to obtain public recognition and future commissions, and the perfume of illicit sex was certain to garner attention. Two of the most celebrated works at the Salon of 1847, the last held before the revolution of 1848, treat the subject that would soon predominate. The fame of August Clésinger’s *Woman Bitten by a Serpent* (FIG. 6.9) was guaranteed by the well-founded rumor that the figure was based on that of “La Présidente,” Apollonie Sabatier, the beautiful “Muse et Madone” of Baudelaire and, from 1844–46, the lover of Clésinger. She had recently taken up with the rich publisher Alfred Mosselman, who asked Clésinger to make a cast of her body. From various plasters and personal knowledge Clésinger created the extraordinary marble of “La Présidente” in ecstasy. The ambitious sculptor took the next step and exhibited it at the Salon of 1847. After seeing it there, Chopin wrote, “The statue that Clésinger exhibited represents a nude woman in an attitude which is more than indecent—so much that to justify the pose, he had to wrap a serpent around one of the legs of the statue. It is fearful how she writhes. . . . she is a very well-known

6.10 (opposite)

Pierre Manguin
(1815–1869), architect

Partial view of staircase,
hôtel particulier of
Esther Lackmann,
marquise de Païva, 1866

Avenue des
Champs-Elysées



kept woman of Paris.”¹⁷ The critic Théophile Gautier, himself no stranger to Sabatier, recognized the novelty of Clésinger’s marble: “[It is] unheard of in our time to exhibit without a mythological title a masterpiece which is neither a goddess nor a nymph . . . but simply a woman.”¹⁸ For most of the first half of the nineteenth century, the high style in sculpture, zealously guarded by the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, was neoclassicism. Even the most sensual of the sculptors under Louis-Philippe—James Pradier—conceived sensuality in terms of idealized (and rather mannered) forms. Clésinger introduced an important shift toward naturalism and the overt expression of sexuality that at once recalled Rococo art (Clodion, for example) and anticipated Jean-Baptiste

Carpeaux and even Rodin. The Rococo Revival was of course a key component of Second Empire style, especially in the decorative arts. It is no coincidence that Clésinger, Carpeaux, and Rodin each coined their particular styles after passing through a Rococo phase.

Thomas Couture’s *Romans of the Decadence* (FIG. 6.12) represented the flip side of the fascination with illicit sex. It was based upon two verses in Juvenal’s Sixth Satire: “We are suffering today from the fatal results of a long peace, more damaging than arms, /Luxury has rushed upon us, and avenges the enslaved universe.” After a long night of debauchery, exhausted orgiasts swoon before statues of Republican virtue. The state had purchased *Romans of the Decadence*, plainly mod-

6.11
Nadar (Gaspard-Félix
Tournachon) (1825–1910)
Sarah Bernhardt, 1864
Modern print from a
collodion glass negative
Musée d’Orsay





eled on the great Paolo Veronese work *Feast in the House of Levi* at the Louvre, in advance of the Salon, and Couture was thought by many critics and officials to embody the future of French painting—"la grande peinture has not yet given up the ghost."¹⁹ Interpreted by some as a criticism of the July Monarchy, by others a condemnation of modern society in general, the painting was well received at the Salon of 1847. But the reproving allegory fell flat when it was shown again at the Exposition Universelle in 1855.²⁰ There it won only a second-class medal. Couture was devastated: "The award I received was of a secondary level and I was excluded from the great fête given for French painters.

It was a cruel and bitter pill to swallow and, as a result, I lost interest in exhibiting."²¹ The picture had probably lost its luster because the moralizing message was less welcome in the midst of the freewheeling *fête imperiale* than it had been during the morally straitlaced reign of Louis-Philippe. A cultural shift was underway: while visitors to the Salon in the 1830s and 1840s could safely assume that any female nudes they encountered were meant to represent classical goddesses or exotic, otherworldly odalisques, during the 1850s and 1860s these nudes were just as likely to represent a Parisian prostitute or celebrity with loose morals.

6.12

Thomas Couture
(1815–1879)

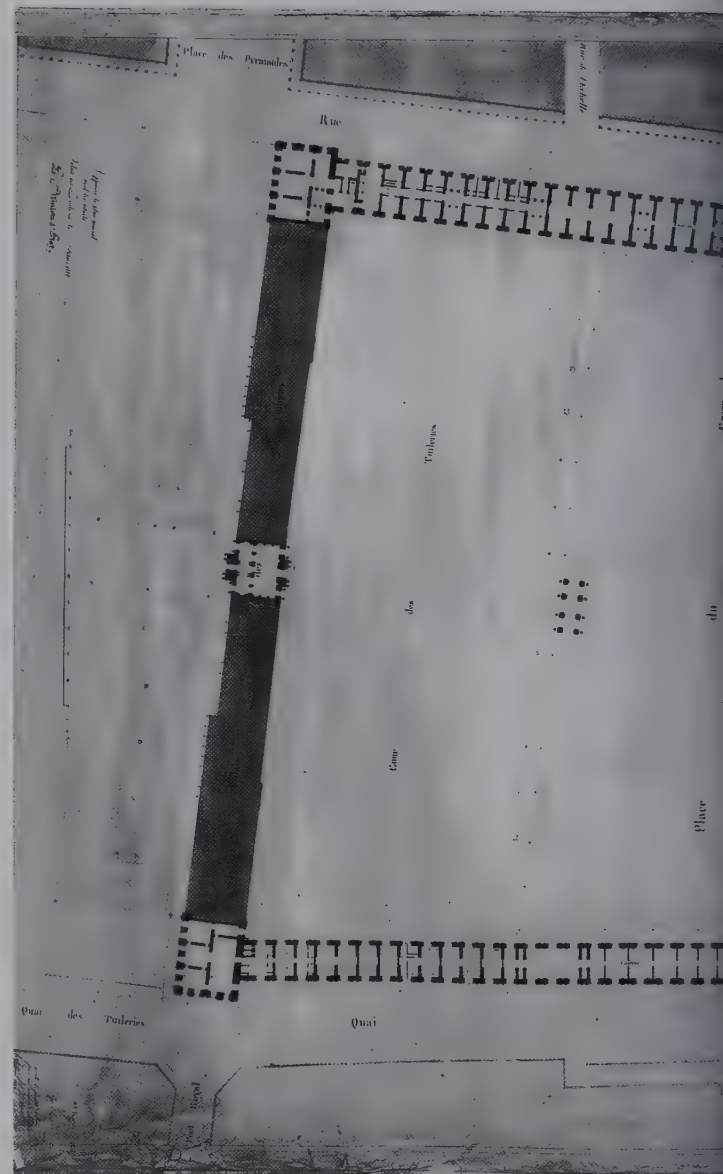
*Romans of the
Decadence*, 1847

Oil on canvas, 15 ft.
5¹/₁₆ in. x 25 ft. 3⁷/₈ in.
(4.72 x 7.72 m)
Musée d'Orsay

THE NEW LOUVRE

One of Louis-Napoleon's first actions upon assuming power was to initiate the completion of the Louvre. King Louis-Philippe had stolen an advance on him by finishing many of the conspicuous projects begun by Napoleon—the Palais-Bourbon was completed in 1832, the Arc de Triomphe was completed in 1836, the Madeleine was consecrated in 1840—all thanks to the determination of Louis-Philippe's minister Adolphe Thiers. Even the obelisk of Luxor was installed in the place de la Concorde not by the great conqueror of Egypt but rather by Louis-Philippe.²² Yet he ignored the Louvre while lavishing money and attention on Versailles, which he envisioned as the museum of French history that, in fact, it remains today. Stymied at first by the refusal of the National Assembly to approve new construction, Louis-Napoleon had to content himself with Félix Duban's meticulous restoration of the existing palace of the Louvre. But as soon as he achieved personal control over the government in 1851, he ordered the unification of the Tuileries with the Louvre, the "grand dessein" that monarchs had dreamed of for four centuries.

To connect the urban palace of the Louvre, at the western edge of fortified Paris in the mid-sixteenth century, with the garden palace of the Tuileries, outside the city walls, Catherine de' Medici conceived, in 1556 and Henry IV began to build, in 1595, the Grande Galerie along the Seine. Long after Louis XIV enlarged the Louvre to its present form, enclosing the Cour Carrée, Napoleon I commissioned from his architects, Charles Percier and Pierre-François Fontaine, a new wing that would mirror the Grande Galerie and enclose a new courtyard. Napoleon's wing ran along the rue de Rivoli, reaching back toward the Louvre, but complete connection was not possible: there was a squalid little neighborhood in the path. Balzac described it in *La Cousine Bette*: "Beyond the little gate that leads from the Carrousel bridge to the Rue du Musée, anyone visiting Paris... is bound to notice a dozen houses with dilapidated façades, whose discouraged landlords have not troubled to repair them.... In passing this dead wedge and happening to notice the Impasse du Doyenne, one experiences a chilling of the soul, and wonders who could possibly live in such a place, and what goes on there at night, when the alley becomes an ambush, and where the vices of Paris, wrapped





in the mantle of the night, are given full scope.”²³

That did not deter Louis-Napoleon. Immediately after the coup d'état of December 1851, he summoned the architect Louis Visconti and gave him a sketch of what he wanted to be done, asking Visconti to render his sketch in “architectural terms.” Visconti sought to defer to Félix Duban, since 1848 the architect of the Louvre. But Louis-Napoleon disliked Duban’s archaeological approach, and he had rejected the piecemeal plan developed by Percier and Fontaine during their forty-four-year tenure as architects of the palace.²⁴ He wanted a vast palace in a new style. On February 29, 1852, Visconti presented his plan and an estimate of 25 million francs (FIG. 6.13). It was brilliant. Not only did he propose to extend the rue de Rivoli and the corresponding wing in a straight line to connect the Tuileries and the Louvre on the north, he proposed to leave the huge enclosed space largely empty, creating only two small new palaces to flank the old western façade of the Cour Carrée. By making their court

facades parallel to the old Louvre, and their street facades parallel to the streets (rue de Rivoli and the quai du Louvre), he masked the problem that had plagued court architects for four hundred years: the palace of the Tuileries was built on an axis different from that of the Louvre. Louis-Napoleon was delighted. He then turned to his new prefect, Baron George-Eugène Haussmann, and ordered him to clear the slum between the two palaces. Construction began on July 25, 1852 (FIG. 6.15). Duban, still charged with the repair of the old Louvre, resigned in 1853. The construction was estimated to require five years. Visconti did not live to see it completed; he died suddenly on December 29, 1853.

Visconti was replaced with Hector-Martin Lefuel, and it is his Louvre that we see today. Much of the new construction designed by Visconti had been built up to the second floor, but Lefuel devised a scheme by which Visconti’s elegant and spare decoration could be enriched by carving the existing stones in greater relief. Lefuel redirected the decorative scheme away



from the classicism that had inspired Visconti, the Louvre of Louis XIV, toward the French Renaissance style of the Louvre that Pierre Lescaut had designed for Henri II. This followed Louis-Napoleon's preference for rich embellishment: a huge rendering for the façades of the eastern wall of the Cour Napoléon bears corrections noted by the minister of state, Achille Fould, that stipulate the emperor's preference for engaged columns rather than pilasters, i.e., for deep sculptural relief over planar articulation (FIG. 6.14). Even Jacques Lemercier's Sully pavilion, built for Louis XIII in 1624 (at the center of the drawing), was insufficiently ornamented, so Lefuel added more carvings in greater relief, rebuilt the dome, and flanked it with two new François I-style chimneys to bring it into accord with the dense decor of Lefuel's new pavilions, the Denon and the Richelieu (FIG. 6.16). The strongly sculptural style is visible not only in Lefuel's wash drawings but also in the remarkable photographs commissioned by the state from Edouard Baldus, who himself

preferred strong contrasts of light and shadow in his compositions. Lefuel's hybrid creation of eclecticism, incorporating elements of sixteenth-, seventeenth-, and eighteenth-century French architecture, enthrones the direction of the preceding decades as the "official" style of Napoleon III. Describing the new Louvre, the architect and writer Ernest Rouyer wrote in 1867, "Someday one will surely recognize in the architectural works of our times what we hesitate to recognize today: the *style Napoleon III*. . . . If we consider the whole ensemble of our great modern monuments, so different in individual appearance, these vast boulevards with their magnificent borders of houses, one will recognize with us that all these immense works truly constitute a style particular to the period."²⁵

Napoleon I conceived the Musée Napoléon, as the Louvre was called during the First Empire, as an acropolis of culture, an encyclopedic museum of the greatest works of art brought to France as the trophies of the Grand Army. Napoleon III saw his new Louvre

6.15

Edouard-Denis Baldus
(1813–1889)

*The Cour Napoléon Seen
from the Carrousel*, 1854–55

Salted paper print from a
glass negative, 21¾ x 41¾ in.
(55 x 106 cm)

Musée Carnavalet

as a grand secretariat for the administration of empire and a reflection of the power of his bureaucracy. The Imperial Museum received only a small portion of the new construction. Instead, huge stables, assembly halls, the Imperial Library, and ministerial suites were fitted out, some amazing in their luxury. Most no longer exist. The Salle des Etats, a vast hall designed to provide a stage for the emperor's annual reception of the various representative bodies—the National Assembly, the

Senate, the Council of State—was provided with an ambitious cycle of allegories painted by Charles-Louis Müller. Abandoned after 1870, it was stripped of its decor; today it is the gallery that displays Veronese's *Marriage at Cana*. The suite known as the apartment of the duc de Morny, Louis-Napoleon's half-brother and a government official of high rank, is one of the few ensembles to exist today, perfectly preserved thanks to the longtime occupation of the Ministry of Finance



6.16

Edouard-Denis Baldus
(1813–1889)

*The Richelieu Pavilion
under Construction,*
late 1856–early 1857

Salted paper print
from a wet collodion
glass-plate negative
51.5 x 37.9 cm
Musée d'Orsay

(FIG. 6.17). In its furnishings, it reflects the unusual marriage of comfort and ostentation that is distinctive to the Second Empire.

The new Louvre comprised a pair of enormous courtyards, the old Cour Carrée and the new Cour Napoléon, but the new court had no entrance. Lefuel's solution to the problem is widely regarded as his greatest contribution to the new Louvre; he created a new building in the midst of the old Grande Galerie along

the Seine. Called the Guichets, or entrance gates, its function was to provide a monumental entrance to the imperial city. Three great rolling arches pierced the formerly impenetrable wall of the Grande Galerie, topped with a pavilion that expresses on the *piano nobile* the lateral movement of the long corridor within. The roof is punctuated by a pair of Renaissance-style lanterns that in turn enframe a tall, pedimented tablet that originally bore an equestrian relief of the emperor,



6.17

Louis Tullius Joachim Visconti (1791–1853) and Hector-Martin Lefuel (1810–1880), architects

Grand Salon in the ceremonial apartment of the State Ministry of Napoleon III, 1861

Musée du Louvre, Richelieu Wing (former Ministry of Finance)



6.18

Edouard-Denis Baldus
(1813–1889)

Construction of the
Guichets and demolition
of the Grande Galerie of
the Louvre, seen from the
northwest, December
1865

Albumin print from a
wet collodion glass-plate
negative, 14 3/8 x 18 1/4 in.
(36.5 x 47.5 cm)
Archives Nationales

centered on the Pont du Carousel. That work was removed in 1870, and a *Spirit of the Arts* by the academic sculptor Antonin Mercier (1845–1916) looks out over the Seine today.

The Guichets not only would direct traffic from the bridge and the quay through the interior of the Cour Napoléon, through the north wing of the new Louvre, and beyond to the rue de Rivoli, but eventually they would provide access to the (yet unbuilt) avenue de l'Empereur and the (yet unbuilt) new Opéra, providing one of the key cross-axes of the new Paris. To create a symmetrical façade on the quay that would center on the Guichets, Lefuel made his most controversial decision. He destroyed the western section of Henri IV's Grande Galerie and dismantled its terminus, the Pavillon de Flore, built in 1610 to join the Tuileries with the Grande Galerie. Both had severe structural

problems, but Lefuel's decision was radical, a reflection of Napoleon III's bold new regime, and quite at odds with the conservative, preservational aesthetic that Duban and Visconti had brought to the Louvre. Baldus's photographs of the demolition and new construction bear witness to the brutality of the scheme (FIG. 6.18).

On August 14, 1857, Napoleon III inaugurated the new Louvre at a solemn banquet celebrating the complete unification of the Louvre and the Tuileries. The following day, a holiday, all the buildings were thrown open to the public. The day after that, work recommenced and continued throughout the Second Empire; the Guichets and the Pavillon de Sessions were finally completed in 1869. Early on, Théophile Gautier reflected on the long history of the project: "We dream of the long list of kings who put their hand on this interminable Louvre, [this palace] that we now see completed:

François I, Henri II, Henri III, Catherine de Médicis, Henri IV, Louis XIII, Louis XIV, Napoléon I, Louis XVIII, succeeded by Pierre Lescot, Ducerceau, Cambiche, Dupeyrac, Lemerrier, Lebrun, Leveau, Claude Perrault, Messrs. Percier and Fontaine, a whole dynasty of talents, and we say to ourselves, with pride, that it has been completed in a single reign."²⁶ As the scaffolding fell later in the decade, he found no fault: "These statues, these coats-of-arms, these friezes, and these ornamental panels, separated by handsome fluted Corinthian columns, form an elegant whole of extraordinary richness, which the eye can enjoy from today on, because the scaffoldings have been removed. This superb facade, showing itself in its striking whiteness, proves that the new Louvre will have nothing to envy of the old, even

though the human spirit habitually denigrates the present at the profit of the past. One could not expect less from the intelligent grouping of the best talents of the period on these splendid facades, where the statuary fraternally gives its hand to the architecture."²⁷ Paris could not enjoy the splendid new Louvre for long. The finishing touches were applied in the last days of 1869, as war with Germany loomed on the horizon. The next year Paris capitulated to the Prussians, and in the ensuing civil war the Tuileries were burned (see FIG. 6.102). The ruins of the Tuileries scarred Louis-Napoleon's splendid imperial city for a decade, until the government of the Third Republic decided to raze them, breaking definitively the *grande dessein* that had preoccupied monarchs for four centuries.

6.19

Giuseppe Castiglione
(1829–1906)

*The Salon Carré at
the Louvre, c. 1861*

Oil on canvas,
27½ x 40½ in.
(69 x 103 cm)

Musée du Louvre



THE EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE OF 1855

The French government was deeply embarrassed by the remarkable success of London's 1851 Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations. They had been trumped; as Prince Napoleon explained, "the success of the London Universal Exposition impelled us to emulation. Scarcely had the doors of the Crystal Palace closed when everyone began to demand that we hold a similar event in Paris."²⁸ Even worse, they had been bettered in an area that they thought they owned. "The idea of the Exposition is eminently French," Prince Napoleon huffed in 1855.²⁹ In principal, the Parisian Exposition Publique des Produits de l'Industrie Française was considered to be an annual event, the most prestigious in Europe, although only eleven were held between the first, in 1798, and the last, in 1849.³⁰ But the issue involved much more than the location of a trade fair. Queen Victoria's consort, Prince Albert, the principal agent behind the London exhibition, had used it to promote a foreign policy of peaceful expansion through trade. The emperor recognized that it was essential to establish France's role in a world in which her perpetual competitor, Great Britain, once again seemed to be taking a lead. It was therefore decided that at the French fair, unlike the Crystal Palace exhibition, the fine arts would be included alongside the industrial arts. While some could question whether French industry was the equal of that in Britain or Germany, there could be no doubt about the superiority of French art. Then, as now, the French considered their culture as one of their greatest tools of foreign policy.

The initiative to include art in a commercial fair emerged in 1851 from the Académie des Beaux-Arts, where Ingres's great friend and patron, the marquis de Pastoret, proposed a grand retrospective exhibition of French painting of the previous half century. Invited to the Château de Saint-Cloud in May 1853, Pastoret, Prince Napoleon, and several ministers, among them Achille Fould, presented the idea to the emperor and the empress. The fair's opening was set for two years hence, and Prince Napoleon was appointed the chief commissioner, ensuring that the imperial household, rather than the independent—and Orléanist—academies would retain control. An imperial commission included thirty-seven members who supervised the two components of the exhibition, industry and agriculture as

one part and the fine arts as another. Commissioners included the expected ministers, academicians, industrialists, bankers, and five prestigious members of the art world: Ingres, Delacroix, the engraver Henriquel-Dupont, the sculptor Charles Simart, and the architect Visconti. The emperor's policy of liberality and inclusion was already evident.

With such a divergent group, it was only a matter of time before dissension tore the ranks of the committee. The debate centered on the nature of the art exhibition: would it represent the current state of art in France, or would it be, as Pastoret first proposed, a retrospective of the best works of the French school since the revolution? Pastoret, Ingres, and Prince Napoleon, who had a passionate interest in classical art, all favored the latter, so as to demonstrate to the world and—more importantly—to living French artists the superiority of David and his school to the "moderns." Prosper Mérimée and Delacroix, aided by his close friend, the duc de Morny, the emperor's half-brother, held out for an exhibition of the work of living artists, a scheme that would by definition dilute the work of the Davidians with that of the Romantics and the Realists.

Surprisingly, Delacroix, Mérimée, and Morny prevailed, to Ingres's unending dismay.³¹ Delacroix noted the definitive meeting in his journal: "At half past two, meeting of the Commission. Discussion of the rule concerning the exhibition of works produced since the beginning of the century. Aided by Mérimée, I successfully fought that proposition, which was shelved. Ingres was pitiful; his brain is all warped; he can see only one point."³² Although the theme of the exhibition was stated to be progress in industry and the arts, the result was instead a demonstration of the eclectic state of the arts in France and a reflection of the emperor's refusal to take sides in aesthetic matters.

Having been immensely spoiled by the government of Louis-Philippe, Ingres refused to endorse the exhibition as planned. Yet without the participation of France's greatest living artist, the administration could not hope to succeed. The emperor and empress visited the artist in his atelier in early 1854, and Prince Napoleon assiduously courted him. Late in 1854 Ingres outlined his perquisites to Frédéric de Mercey, who was in charge of the fine arts display: he wanted a gallery to himself, the right to arrange his work as he wished, and the right to

6.20 (opposite)

Manufacture Jules Désfossés; Edouard Muller (1823–1876), designer

Wallpaper depicting the *Garden of Armida*, 1854

Hand-blocked wallpaper, 155⁵/₈ x 134¹³/₁₆ in.

(389 x 337 cm)

Philadelphia Museum of Art; gift (by exchange) of Julia G. Fahnestock in memory of her husband, William Fahnestock, 1988



include as many works, including those installed in distant locations, as he saw fit, all at government expense. Mercey complied and granted similar, though not as extensive, conditions to three other artists — Delacroix, Horace Vernet, and Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps. The government was determined to show French art in all of its glory, beginning with these retrospectives of the aging masters of the French school. The government canceled the annual Salons for 1853 and 1854, to avoid any distraction, and major commissions were given to almost every significant artist. Somehow, however, the result was unexpected: the jury for the 1855 exposition was overwhelmed with some 8,100 submissions, of which nearly 6,000 were refused. A scandal erupted, and the emperor intervened. While there was not enough room in the exhibition to include many more works, certain artists, among them Courbet, did see some of their refused works reinstated. This was the first sign of the institutional instability that would bring about

the Salon des Refusés in 1863, the weakening of the Salon system in the years after 1870, and its dissolution in 1880.

Although the fine art exhibition was initially planned for the Louvre, the arts were given their own palace on the avenue Montaigne, not far from the Palais de l'Industrie on the Champs-Élysées (FIG 6.21). Construction of the Palais des Beaux-Arts was decreed in 1852, and it was built on the site where the Grand Palais and Petit Palais, erected for the 1900 world's fair, are situated today. The large, open space of the Palais des Beaux-Arts was divided with partitions to create long corridors and, for the lucky Ingres, an enclosed room. Without a doubt, he had the best space. Famous for his truculence and for his oft-repeated refusal to exhibit publicly after the criticism he received at the 1834 Salon, Ingres mounted what became the definitive retrospective of his work (FIG. 6.22). Faced with a nearly complete compendium, the critics grappled with

6.21

Edouard-Denis Baldus
(1813–1889)

The Palais de l'Industrie,
after 1855

Albumen-silver print
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,

New York; David Hunter
McAlpin Fund, 1944





6.22

Ingres installation,
Exposition Universelle,
1855

Bibliothèque Nationale
de France



6.23

Delacroix installation,
Exposition Universelle,
1855

Bibliothèque Nationale
de France



6.24

Jean-Auguste-Dominique
Ingres (1780–1867)

The Turkish Bath, 1862

Canvas fixed to wood,
diameter: 43 3/4 in.

(110 cm)

Musée du Louvre

what emerged as Ingres's distinctive mannerism: willful distortions of human anatomy rendered in an obsessively meticulous style. But as Baudelaire said, "The beautiful is always bizarre. . . . I do not mean to say that it should be coldly, deliberately bizarre, for in that case it would be a monster that had jumped the tracks of life. I am saying that it always contains a little bizarreness, a naïve, intentional, and unconscious bizarreness, and that it is this bizarreness that makes it particularly beautiful."³³ Baudelaire blamed Ingres's bizarreness on an "immoderate taste for *style*."³⁴ While Ingres's cult of Raphael's style was no longer fashionable, his display at the 1855 exposition would prove to provide formative experiences for any number of young artists, whether it was the young Cézanne, Degas, and Manet or the slightly older Adolphe-William Bouguereau, Alexandre Cabanel, and Jean-Léon Gérôme. The former group found in Ingres the license to indulge in willful artifice—art for art's sake—while the latter found inspiration for a technical perfection rooted in the art of Renaissance

masters (FIG. 6.25). Ingres would continue on his immoderate path into the 1860s (FIG. 6.24), while echoes of his work would continue to reverberate throughout the century, and, in the work of Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse, well into the next. After a second viewing of Ingres's exhibition, even Delacroix conceded that the "group of Ingres's things seemed to me different than it did the first time, and I am thankful to him for many fine qualities that he gets."³⁵

Delacroix, unlike Ingres, looked forward to his exhibition, even if he also had misgivings about the official art establishment so amply represented on the various committees. The reluctant Romantic assembled an extraordinary display of his greatest masterpieces in addition to much of his recent work (FIG. 6.23). Controversial pictures, such as the morbid *Massacre at Scio* (see FIG. 5.III) or the macabre *Medea* (Lille, Musée des Beaux-Arts) were hung next to ingratiating flower pieces and genre scenes. The comte de Nieuwerkerke objected to the inclusion of Delacroix's



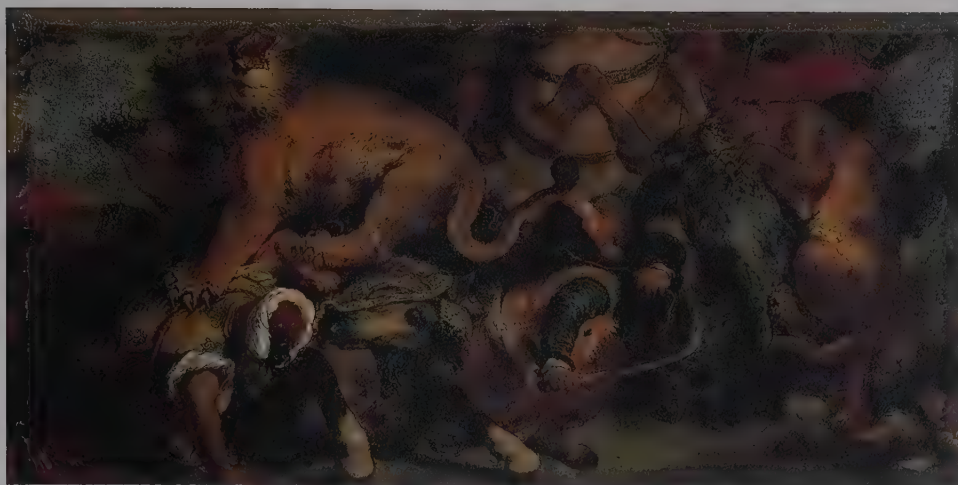
Liberty Leading the People (see FIG. 5.136), which was owned, though not displayed, by the state; but the emperor, no less, intervened to ensure that this potent image of a popular rebellion (which closed the door on the Bourbon Restoration) would be present. According to legend, the emperor asked whether the painting was any good. "Sire," Nieuwerkerke replied, "M. Delacroix considers it one of his best." "Well then, let it be shown with the rest."³⁶

The government commissioned a huge painting, *The Lion Hunt*, to be the centerpiece of his display. A summation of his lifelong observation of Rubens's color technique and his own interest in exploring aspects of the sublime—horror and the terrible—*The Lion Hunt* served as a lightning rod for critics, most of whom had already made up their minds about Delacroix long before seeing the painting. (The painting, donated by the state to the museum in Bordeaux, was partially destroyed in a fire in that museum; only a fragment remains [FIG. 6.26].) For Maxime Du Camp, peren-

nially opposed to Delacroix, it was the last straw: "Color has here arrived at its last degree of extravagance. It is crazy, almost insane, even the harmony is neglected, as all of the tones have an analogous value. . . . M. Delacroix will not endure as a history painter, nor as a genre painter; if he endures, which is perhaps doubtful, it will be only as a painter of the picturesque. A classical author would say, M. Delacroix is not the leader of a school but the leader of a riot. This *Lion Hunt* is the last degree of aberration, and it argues the grotesque to the impossible."³⁷ Gautier was impressed by the "chaos of claws, teeth, cutlasses, lances, torsos, necks, as Rubens loved them; all of that in a color so brilliant and full of sun that it almost makes you squint."³⁸ Baudelaire, as always, saw the point immediately: "Never before have more beautiful, more intense colors penetrated to the soul through the optic nerve; one could say that this painting, like sorcerers or telepathics, projects its thought at a distance. The singular phenomenon derives from the power of the colorist, the perfect accord of the

6.25
William-Adolphe
Bouguereau (1825–1905)
*Charity, or The Indigent
Family*, 1865
Oil on canvas, 48 x 60 in.
(121.9 x 152.4 cm)
Birmingham Museums
and Art Gallery, England





tones, and the harmony between color and the subject.”³⁹ To young artists, Delacroix’s exhibition proved as influential as that of Ingres. ‘Oddly enough, many of those who admired Ingres were equally moved by Delacroix. For Cézanne, Edgar Degas, and Manet, for example, Delacroix represented an ideal artist independent of the academy who was nonetheless profoundly linked to French tradition and the grand manner.

Delacroix always considered himself a classical artist, one who drew inspiration from the Italian Renaissance as easily as from the northern baroque painters, and he increasingly resented the marginalization implied by the label of Romantic. His keen awareness of Raphael, but equally his ability to effectively synthesize an array of Renaissance sources, is spectacularly demonstrated in his *Expulsion of Heliодorus from the Temple*, a mural painted for the Church of Saint-Sulpice from 1856 to 1861 (FIG. 6.27). Clearly based on Raphael’s *Expulsion of Heliодorus* in the Vatican’s Stanza dell’Elіodoro of 1511–14, which may much earlier have inspired the composition of Delacroix’s *Massacre at Scio* (see FIG. 5.111), Delacroix’s Saint-Sulpice mural departs from Raphael in translating the essentially lateral tension of Raphael’s unusual composition into a vertical space recalling Venetian art, with hovering figures reminiscent of Tintoretto. “The impression,” as Frank Trapp pointed out in his classic study of Delacroix, “is not one of dependence [on Raphael] but of purposeful analogy.”⁴⁰

The displays of Horace Vernet and Decamps provoked far less criticism than those of Ingres and Delacroix. Vernet, who preceded Ingres as director at the Académie de France in Rome, was extremely well connected in government circles. His stylish art, which portrayed Romantic subject matter with a polished technique, was widely admired because it conjured up associations with a glorious French past and suggested

an equally glorious future. Decamps, an accomplished genre painter whose work was more popular with collectors (including, for example, the Goncourts) than with the government, mined the vein of orientalism that was uncovered by French imperialist ambitions in North Africa. Not surprisingly, the discussion of artists in 1855 was framed in social and political rather than aesthetic terms. If Ingres was identified as a partisan of throne and altar, and Delacroix a rash revolutionary, then Vernet was an exponent of constitutional monarchy and Decamps a painter for bourgeois merchants.⁴¹ Just as the emperor sought to draw support for his regime from a variety of political constituencies, so the display at his world’s fair was interpreted to represent the principal factions of the art world, itself presumed to be a mirror of the fractured French body politic.

The one artist who in fact acted as an activist in political and aesthetic arenas stole the limelight at the Exposition Universelle with works that were refused by the jury. Long before the exhibition opened, Nieuwerkerke attempted to secure the cooperation of Gustave Courbet, then only in his mid-thirties, by offering him a lavish commission. Courbet ostentatiously refused, saying that he could not be bought, least of all by a government that he did not recognize, and that, further, he himself constituted his own “government,” and he defied Nieuwerkerke’s government to produce an offer that Courbet’s “government” could accept. “M. Courbet,” exclaimed a stunned Nieuwerkerke, “you are certainly a proud man!” “I am astonished that you have just noticed it,” Courbet retorted. “I, sir, am the most conceited man in France.”⁴² Courbet, whose paintings had been systematically refused at the Salon until the reforms instituted under the short-lived Second Republic enabled him to win a medal at the Salon of 1848, submitted thirteen paintings of which

6.26

Eugène Delacroix
(1798–1863)

The Lion Hunt,
fragment and detail, 1855

Oil on canvas, 68 x 142
in. (173 x 361 cm)
Musée des Beaux-Arts,
Bordeaux

only two were refused, presumably because they were simply too large: *The Burial* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay), which had provoked a storm of criticism at the Salon of 1851; and the newly painted *Painter's Studio* (FIG. 6.28), an enormous construction of self-promotion that nevertheless endures as a great work of art. Courbet seized this rejection as a pretext to persuade his patron, Alfred Bruyas of Montpellier, to pay for a private pavilion. Because the government was unwilling to allow Courbet to provoke a scandal, it permitted him to place his pavilion on the avenue Montaigne, directly across the street from the Palais de Beaux-Arts.

The biggest act in what some called Courbet's circus was *The Painter's Studio* (FIG. 6.28). Titled by him *Interior of My Studio, Real Allegory Comprising a Period of Seven Years of My Artistic Life*, it was indeed a statement of the principles and interests that informed his art. Inspired by a socialist account of the destitute of London, Flora Tristan's *Promenades dans Londres* (1840) as well as by the philosophy of the social thinker Charles Fourier,⁴³ the picture, based on the composition of Velazquez's *Maids of Honor* (Prado, Madrid), represents a personal *Human Comedy* of Balzacian dimensions. As Courbet described it: "The scene is laid in my studio in Paris. The picture is divided into two parts. I am in the center, painting; on the right are the 'shareholders,' that is, my friends, the workers, the art collectors. On the left the others, the world of trivialities: the common people, the destitute, the poor, the wealthy, the exploited, the exploiters; those who thrive on death. On the wall in the background hang the *Return from the Fair* and *The Bathers* and the picture I am working on."⁴⁴ At the left, characters such as the bearded Jew, the poor woman suckling a child, and perhaps the little boy amazed by the magical act of painting, seem to derive from Tristan's accounts; at the right, one recognizes Courbet's friends—the philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, the writer Jules Champfleury, the patron Bruyas, the poet Baudelaire. These are the "shareholders," Courbet's supporters, who stand transfixed by the artist's performance. Only Baudelaire, preoccupied with his writing at the extreme right, ignores the artist. Even the model (copied from a photograph) stands as an admiring muse while Courbet improbably paints a landscape (from imagination) instead of the figure painting for which she presumably came to pose. Delacroix lamented in his *Journal* that the jury

had refused "one of the most remarkable works of our times."⁴⁵ Baudelaire concurred. In his revue of the display he committed his own stunning audacity by comparing Courbet to Ingres: "The heroic sacrifice that M. Ingres makes in honor of tradition and the idea of Raphaelesque beauty is accomplished by M. Courbet for the benefit of exterior, positive, immediate nature. In their war with imagination they obey two different motives, and two contrary fanaticisms lead them to the same immolation."⁴⁶

Ingres would have scoffed at any mention of Courbet's art in the same sentence as his, but the attention that the young upstart secured reflected the breakdown in the hierarchy to which Ingres and the Académie stubbornly clung. Although Ingres invoked the authority of the classical canon in his work, he was not, properly speaking, a history painter as Jacques-Louis David would have understood the term; Delacroix was. On the other hand, Courbet laid claim to history painting with his vast scale and putative "realist" allegories. But the collapse of the hierarchy of the genres was painfully apparent at the fair. What was left of history painting was overwhelmed by genre paintings, landscapes, and portraits—evidence, more than anything else, of the role that the emerging art market played as a substitute for the old system of government patronage, which consciously sought to encourage grand history painting. Modern collectors—members of the haute bourgeoisie rather than the artistocracy—did not buy history painting; only the state would. In 1855 perceptive critics such as Edmond About noted that landscape painting was emerging as the dominant genre in French painting: "The only genre in which the French painters seem to gather in a school is landscape painting. It is different from the other genres because its only recognized master is nature, the country, and because the only studio it requires is nature." Yet About found a disturbing sameness in approach: "No one is sacrificing his originality, no one is imitating others. Fifty to sixty artists, equally talented, or very close, spread out in the fields with all of their equipment. They come back to Paris, compare their paintings at the next exhibition, and observe that the results are almost identical."⁴⁷

About lamented the absence of style in contemporary landscape painting, but in fact there was a wide variety of recognizable styles: the Poussinesque or academic style of Paul Flandrin or Théodore Caruelle

6.27 (opposite)

Eugène Delacroix
(1798–1863)

*The Expulsion of Heliogorus
from the Temple*, 1854–61

Oil and wax on wall,
24 ft. 7¹/₆ in. x 15 ft. 10⁷/₈ in.
(7.51 x 4.85 m)
Church of Saint-Sulpice







6.28

Gustave Courbet
(1819–1877)

The Painter's Studio, 1854–55

Oil on canvas, 11 ft. 10 in. x 19 ft. 7³/₈ in.
(3.61 x 5.98 m)

Musée d'Orsay



6.29

Camille Corot
(1796–1875)

*Impression of Morning:
Diana Bathing*

Oil on canvas,
66 x 101¼ in.

(168 x 257 cm)

Musée des Beaux-Arts,
Bordeaux

d'Aligny; the Claudian or poetic Realism of Camille Corot; the aggressive Realism of Courbet; the Romantic Realism of Jean-François Millet; the naturalism of Théodore Rousseau and Charles Daubigny. Most of the critics found a duality of two opposing styles—imaginary versus real. To the former belonged the academics and Corot, to the latter all of the various naturalists and Realists. This duality was represented by the art of Corot and Rousseau —“the two men who have always been considered by public opinion as the preeminent representatives of landscape painting.”⁴⁸

Unlike his contemporaries Delacroix and Ingres, Corot was not offered a retrospective; and unlike them he had never engaged himself in the politics of the arts administration in France. In addition, Nieuwerkerke disliked Corot’s “muddy color” and “cottony texture.”⁴⁹ But Corot already enjoyed a loyal following among collectors, dealers, and even the emperor, who bought *Souvenir de Marcoussis, près de Montlhéry* (Musée d’Orsay) from the fair. His Claudian reverie *Impression of Morning: Diana Bathing* (FIG. 6.29), the largest of the paintings he showed, was roundly praised for its successful communication of feeling, achieved through

a transformation rather than a duplication of nature: “No artist has more style or can better communicate his ideas in a landscape. He transforms everything he touches, he appropriates everything he paints, he never copies, and even when he works directly from nature, he invents. As they pass through his imagination, objects take on a vague and delightful form. Colors soften and melt; everything becomes fresh, young, harmonious; he is the poet of landscape.”⁵⁰

If Corot was the poet of landscape, Rousseau was the novelist. In contrast to the former’s evocative mists, Rousseau’s highly finished pictures presented themselves as direct transcriptions of nature. Yet both artists used nature to communicate ideas. *Edge of the Woods at Monts-Girard*, shown in 1855 (FIG. 6.30), was described by Alfred Sensier in anthropomorphic terms: “a road in the forest by the side of which grows an old oak tree, grim as though irritated to see a young tree daring to grow again after the slaughter of its contemporaries.”⁵¹ Rousseau had abstained from the Salon from 1841 to 1848, a response, like that of Ingres, to hostile criticism. By 1855, however, Rousseau was hailed as a dean of the naturalist school. As Sensier put it in his biography of the artist, “There was no longer in the press or among



the collectors an actively hostile current, as there had been before; Rousseau always had his enemies or those who did not understand his art, but his victory was complete, considerable, and conclusive.”⁵²

Baudelaire, along with many other critics, was concerned that the rise of naturalist landscape painting would lead to the demise of expressive painting. He argued that landscapes were never beautiful in themselves: “If the combination of trees, mountains, water and houses that we call landscape is beautiful, its beauty does not come from itself but from me, by my own grace, from the idea or feeling I associate with it.”⁵³ At the other end of the critical spectrum, the conservative writer Charles Blanc worried that “to make a painted object impress the viewer in the exact same way as the seen object” was equally misguided, for the painter ignored the painter’s currency—“craft has its own requirements.”⁵⁴

What these men were really grappling with is the threat of photography, which, by 1855, had begun to be considered as a legitimate medium of artistic expression. Consistent in his worldview, Baudelaire did not admire photography and feared its influence: “The exclusionary taste for the Real (so noble when limited to its proper

applications) here oppresses and smothers the taste for the Beautiful.”⁵⁵ Photography, he felt, was the enemy of poetic beauty. Those who believe in “nature and only nature” could consider photography to be the perfect art, since “the industry that would give us a result identical to nature would be the absolute art.”⁵⁶ And since “the photography industry,” in his view, was “the refuge of frustrated painters, insufficiently talented or too lazy to complete their studies,”⁵⁷ their product was destined to be mediocre. Despite—or perhaps because of—Baudelaire’s precocious apprehension, he himself seems to have been one of the earliest subjects of photographic portraiture to grasp its capacity to project a powerful artistic personality such as his own (FIG. 6.31).

The Exposition Universelle marked the maturation of this threat and the beginning of the serious debate on the status of photography. Although the organizers avoided the thorny question by presenting photography in the Palais de l’Industrie, the huge display, with contributions from countries around the world, was a persuasive demonstration of the potential of this remarkable new medium. All the genres were represented: portraiture, still life, landscape, documentary photography, and reproductions of works of art. The jury

6.30

Théodore Rousseau
(1812–1867)

*The Edge of the Woods at
Monts-Girard*, 1854

Oil on wood, 31½ x 48 in.
(80 x 121.9 cm)

Metropolitan Museum
of Art; Catharine Lorillard
Wolfe Collection, Wolfe
Fund, 1896



noted the extraordinary technical advances since the 1851 fair in London to assert that "the beautiful discovery of Daguerre and of Nicéphore Niépce has surpassed the value of a pure scientific fact and rightly counts among the new arts."⁵⁸ The small, evanescent images invented by Daguerre in 1839 were considered miracles, but they could never challenge painting due to their miniature scale and their reflective, mirrorlike surfaces. But the development of paper and glass negatives to make paper prints changed everything. The calotype (paper negative) process patented by Henry Fox Talbot in 1841, the waxed paper negative developed by Gustave Le Gray in 1851, the collodion negative developed by Frederick Scott Archer (1851), and the albumen prints

created by Louis-Désiré Blanquart-Evrard (1851) contributed to the new possibility of a single negative being used to make an almost infinite number of prints whose size was limited only by paper manufacturers. Because the property rights of Niépce's invention (perfected by Daguerre) belonged to the French state, photography, like the notion of a world's fair, was widely considered to be something French. This explains the surprise of Ernest Lacan, an important early historian of photography, in his review of the 1855 fair in Paris: "One thing strikes one immediately: the particular character of the products of each country. . . . It is even easy to distinguish among the works of photographers from the same country. One can thus say that in photography, as in

6.31 (opposite)
Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon) (1825–1910)
Pierrot with a Basket of Fruit, 1854–55
Gelatin silver print from wet collodion glass negative, 11 x 8 in. (28 x 20.4 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



6.32
Nadar (Gaspard-Félix Tournachon) (1825–1910)
Charles Baudelaire in an Armchair, before March 1855
Proof on salted paper from a glass wet collodion negative, 11 x 6½ in. (28 x 16.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



6.33
Charles Marville
(1816–1879)
The Porte Rouge
Cathedral of Notre-
Dame-de-Paris, 1851
Calotype
8 1/8 x 6 1/8 in.
(20.7 x 15.5 cm)
George Eastman House,
Rochester, New York

painting, there are schools and styles.”⁵⁹ Needless to say, the section of French photography was deemed superior to all other schools.

The Tournachon brothers, alias Nadar and Nadar Jeune, stole the limelight and won a gold medal with their portraits of the famous mime Charles Deburau (FIG. 6.31). In a series of more than a dozen photographs taken with Nadar’s new large-format camera, they portrayed Charles, son of the most famous mime of all time, Baptiste Debureau, going through his repertoire of expressions and poses. These photographs, which were signed Nadar Jeune, for Adrian Tournachon, were actually produced by both brothers. It was the

younger, feckless Adrian, however, who won the gold medal. The next year, after they had ceased to cooperate, his older and infinitely more talented brother Félix pressed suit for control of the pseudonym, and succeeded in keeping the name and the reputation for himself. Although Félix would finally submit to the pressures of the market and produce formulaic portraits in the manner of André Disdéri’s small *cartes-de-visite*, his large portraits of the 1850s, with their dramatic, Rembrandtesque lighting and novel poses, rank among the greatest of the century.

An important component of Romanticism and its architectural equivalent, eclecticism, was the newly found appreciation for nonclassical architecture. Nurtured by the Musée des Monuments Français, the writings of Victor Hugo, and various published *Voyages pittoresques*, illustrated with wood engravings, this new appreciation found expression in photography almost immediately after its invention. In 1851 the Commission des Monuments Historiques ordered a photographic survey of important historic sites in France, the Missions Héliographiques. The first products of these missions constituted one of the glories of the 1855 fair. Lacan wrote that in the past one had “to go to visit these celebrated monuments, or bring back imperfect, insufficient drawings, regardless of the author’s talents. Today photography gives it to you entirely in its admirable reproductions. No detail escapes. . . . What interest, what power, what truth, what analysis! Reunite these proofs, classify these monuments by period, and with great facility you will be able to follow, in the movement of great lines, in the modification of the proportions, in the character of the cultures and in the choice of motifs, the diverse transformations of art.”⁶⁰ Not only did the superb documentary photographs of Baldus (FIG. 6.21), Le Gray, and Marville (FIG. 6.33) help define a new genre of architectural portraiture, they contributed to the movement to preserve the very historical monuments that they portrayed. Up to that time, nonclassical architecture in France had been held in contempt, and all but the most important buildings were often abandoned to ruin. From the success of the Missions Héliographiques, from the new eclectic taste of the Second Empire, and from the immediate threat to old buildings posed by the Haussmannization of Paris, a new, much more

profound sense of national patrimony emerged.

Gustave Le Gray, a veteran of the Missions Héliographiques, was undoubtedly the most painterly photographer to exhibit at the fair. Like the photographers Charles Nègre and Henri Le Secq, he had studied in the atelier of Paul Delaroche and there obtained a conventional artistic education. An early convert to the promise of printing on paper, and one of the creators of the waxed-paper negative, he became an esteemed teacher of photography, promulgating the belief that the new medium demanded new pictorial techniques. Yet his own work closely paralleled the work of contemporary painters. His views of the Fontainebleau forest, showing ancient and gnarled tree limbs cast against the

sky, parallel those of the elderly Théodore Rousseau as well as the young Claude Monet, while his extraordinary seascapes evoke those of Gustave Courbet (FIG. 6.34). Yet Le Gray's work is not derivative; rather, he arrived at results similar to those of the realist painters because he had traveled the same road. He did not succumb to the belief that Baudelaire feared, that the goal of art was simply to re-create nature; instead, like any great artist, he manipulated nature in the service of beauty. In the case of his seascapes, he superimposed photographs of cloud-filled skies over independent views of water and waves. Just as Courbet showed himself painting a landscape in the lofty interior of his studio, Le Gray dared to divorce his art from an abusive marriage to reality.

6.34

Gustave Le Gray
(1820–1882)

The Great Wave, Sète,
1856–69

Albumen silver print
from a glass negative,
13½ x 16½ in.
(33.7 x 41.4 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York; gift of John
Goldsmith Phillips, 1976



The Comte de Nieuwerkerke

The history of the Salon in the Second Empire is linked to the policy of only a handful of individuals. This is much odder than it seems, because the Salon, mostly biannual in the 1850s and mostly annual throughout the 1860s, was an enormous and chaotic exhibition of several thousand works of art, selected from some five thousand submissions sent by some two thousand artists. On such an unwieldy assembly it was impossible to impose form or organization; the Salon was almost always an accurate reflection of the diverse range of quality and style of art currently in practice. But at the same time, some control was possible, particularly at the margins. Provocative artists such as Courbet and Manet were often refused admission; Cézanne wore his refusals as a badge of honor. Others, such as Monet, suffered through association. It is thought that his submissions, frequently innocuous, were actually rejected by some members of the jury because his name resembled that of the infamous Manet, and also because pictures such as *Women in a Garden* (Musée d'Orsay) actually resembled Manet's in subject and style. Paradoxically, Pissarro's bold and dark landscapes, with pigment thickly applied with a palette knife—a technique closely associated with Courbet—were consistently accepted by the juries and exhibited throughout the 1860s. It would seem that the chauvinistic appeal of Pissarro's subjects, scenes of French rural landscapes animated by peasants, outweighed the perceived danger of his avant-garde technique, his association with Courbet's Realism, and his own left-wing politics.

The man responsible for the Salon throughout the Second Empire was comte Alfred Emilien de Nieuwerkerke. An ambitious sculptor of Dutch origin, Nieuwerkerke was clever enough to recognize that he could achieve more as a social climber and government official than he ever would as an artist. He married above his station, but did not hesitate to neglect his wife to cement his relationship to Louis-Napoléon's cousin, princess Mathilde, to whom the future emperor was once engaged. While traveling through Italy in 1845, he met Mathilde Bonaparte at the house of her husband, count Anatole Demidoff, prince of San Donato. Mathilde became Nieuwerkerke's lover; in 1846 she

divorced Demidoff and took up residence in Paris. During the 1848 revolution, Nieuwerkerke was true to type: he fought to preserve the régime of Louis-Philippe while simultaneously hoping to reform the regulations of the annual Salon. Upon the election of Louis-Napoléon as prince-president in December 1848, princess Mathilde had Nieuwerkerke named director of the national museums. The minister of the interior opposed the nomination, however, and Nieuwerkerke was only allowed to assume the position a year later.

Nieuwerkerke lost no time in gathering power for his administration at the expense of old institutions, such as the Institut and the Académie des Beaux-Arts, while currying favor with artists who had been closely associated with the court of Louis-Philippe, such as Ingres. In fact, the relationship between Ingres and Nieuwerkerke, which bore its greatest fruit in a magnificent portrait drawing (FIG. 6.35), is revelatory of the character of both artist and subject: while Nieuwerkerke and Ingres occasionally assisted one another, they were more often in opposition, and they never were friends.⁶¹

Although Ingres was suspicious of Nieuwerkerke and kept his distance from the government of Napoleon III, he was at first careful not to exclude him. In January 1852 he invited the director of museums to his studio to see the completed standing portrait of Mme Moitessier (Washington, National Gallery of Art); in March 1853 Nieuwerkerke provided Ingres with working space at the Louvre. The amicable relationship would have been tested by negotiations over Ingres's participation at the 1855 Exposition Universelle, but those were handled through the offices of Prince Napoleon Bonaparte rather than Nieuwerkerke, and Ingres eventually received all the concessions he demanded. There was a moment of alarm at the close of the world's fair when it appeared that Ingres would receive a medal of the same grade as "the apostle of ugliness," Eugène Delacroix, but this too was fixed when it was agreed that Ingres would be promoted to *grand officier* of the Légion d'Honneur. Nieuwerkerke most probably would have been party to this last negotiation, and it was in the interval of contented calm following the bestowal of this medal that Ingres made Nieuwerkerke's portrait.

Ingres's portrait of Nieuwerkerke shows us the "successful Goliath, elegant, polished and polite, the eye full of sweetness," in the words of the Goncourts.⁶² With a

nod to Nieuwerkerke's position as director of French museums, Ingres gave him the pose of Titian's *Man with a Glove* at the Louvre;⁶³ with a nod to the means by which he attained that position, Ingres rolled back Nieuwerkerke's cape to reveal the bulge in his pants. The *beau batave* has already lost the good looks that catapulted him to success in the 1840s, but Ingres impresses the viewer with the count's noble bearing; the haughty stare implies discernment. The cape, top hat, white gloves, and medals (the cross of the Legion d'Honneur at his neck, and the star of another decoration on his chest) indicate that Nieuwerkerke is wearing formal evening dress, the attire he would wear to a state dinner at the Tuileries, a soiree at the house of princess Mathilde, or a ball at the Opéra.

The truce with Ingres soon ended. In 1861 Napoleon III purchased in Italy, at great expense, the Campana collection of Greek vases and Italian primitive painting, some 12,000 objects in all. In the summer of 1862 Nieuwerkerke and Frédéric Reiset, the curator of painting at the Louvre and a close friend of Ingres, proposed to distribute the majority of the collection among provincial museums. The members of the Institut objected, and Nieuwerkerke rashly responded, "The Institut is [just] a coterie and incapable of judging art."⁶⁴ Ingres took this personally and responded by writing letters of protest that eventually reached the desk of the emperor. Nieuwerkerke published an open letter to Ingres in which he wrote, "I regret, Sir and dear colleague, that I do not always find myself in accord with your opinion on works of art, and, respecting individual opinions, I cannot prevent myself from expressing mine, since I believe them to be well founded."⁶⁵ This public contradiction irritated Ingres enormously, and his friends wrote to each other to express their concern for Ingres's well-being.⁶⁶

Ingres was thus keenly alert when he learned that Nieuwerkerke intended to restrict the prerogatives of the fine arts academy. The Académie des Beaux-Arts, formerly the Académie Royale, was constituted as one of the three branches of the Institut de France in 1795; a fourth branch was added in 1816. The Académie controlled the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, the Prix de Rome, the Académie Française in Rome, and the jury of the Paris Salon. Since most of the academicians had been appointed by previous monarchical governments—from

Louis XVIII to Louis-Philippe—the administration of Napoleon III often found itself at odds with the legitimist factions in the Académie. The organization of the Salon had always been contentious; over the years many artists had proposed reforms, and even Nieuwerkerke attempted to modify the rules on several occasions. But it was in the name of reforming art education that the architect Eugène Viollet-le-Duc and the writer Prosper Mérimée, two habitués of the court, prepared for Nieuwerkerke's signature an inflammatory proposal by which the government would take charge of the administration, curriculum, and appointment of professors at the École des Beaux-Arts; the administration of the Prix de Rome and the Académie Française in

6.35

Jean-Auguste-Dominic Ingres (1780–1867)

Portrait of Alfred-Emilieu O'Hara, comte de Nieuwerkerke, 1856

Graphite and white chalk on cream wove paper, 13¼ x 9¼ in. (33 x 24.3 cm)

Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University Art Museums, Cambridge, Massachusetts; bequest of Grenville L. Winthrop



Rome; and the naming of the jury of the Salon. The decree was signed on November 13, 1863, in the aftermath of the fiasco that created the Salon des Refusés. Nieuwerkerke had already been named, in addition to his position as director of museums, superintendent of fine arts (the first to hold that title since the eighteenth century) and vice president of the Commission des Monuments Historiques, and he had placed the Service des Bâtiments Civils under his administration. In the name of the emperor, Nieuwerkerke had taken control of the preeminent fine arts institutions in France, and curtailed those, such as the Institut, that he could not control. There was an immediate uproar, and Ingres was once again at the forefront of opposition. Uncharacteristically, Ingres prepared and published a point-by-point refutation of the proposal.⁶⁷ But the eighty-three-year-old artist was essentially powerless. He wrote a friend that the "decree is the absurd and ignorant accomplishment of the ugly over the beautiful, and [. . .] in a word the conspiring work of the Romantic [movement] over the classical Greek [movement]."⁶⁸ Naturally, he associated Mérimée with his friend Delacroix. Young art students heckled Nieuwerkerke with slurs about his liaison with princess Mathilde, calling him "Beaver," an animal that builds with its tail.⁶⁹ Nieuwerkerke responded by rehanging Ingres's paintings at the Musée du Luxembourg (*Roger Freeing Angelica* and *Cherubini and the Muse of Lyric Poetry*) in a dark corner.⁷⁰ Ingres took his revenge by making a drawing that showed Nieuwerkerke with the ears of a jackass.

The Salon of 1863 and the Salon des Refusés

The Salon of 1863 represented a turning point for both Nieuwerkerke and for the community of artists. The regulations for that year allowed any artist who had won a medal at a previous salon to bypass the jury, thus favoring those artists previously patronized by the government. Intent on making a stand to uphold academic art against the rising tide of Realism, the jury (still comprised of members of the Académie) rejected as many as 2,783 out of some 5,000 works submitted by nonmedalists.⁷¹ Anticipating rejection, Edouard

Manet and Gustave Doré petitioned comte Walewski, a court official, for more liberal rules of admission. When that failed, they approached a successful art dealer, Louis Martinet, for exhibition space. But he was disinclined to see his gallery stigmatized by rejected art. When the jury's draconian action became known, the artists' cries finally reached the ears of the emperor. To Nieuwerkerke's chagrin, Napoleon III preempted his bureaucrats and took a stand that he hoped would endear him to the people: he ordained a "Salon des Réfusés" in which artists could choose to exhibit the works refused by the jury. Nieuwerkerke's assistant, Charles-Philippe de Chennevières, recalled in his memoirs the sight of the emperor visiting the Salon des Refusés on April 20, 1863, "his cane under his arm, his hands on his knees, stopping from time to time with surprise at the severity of the jury."⁷² Nieuwerkerke doubtless hoped the Refusés would vindicate the jury. In the short term, the confusion provided him with the momentum necessary to promulgate new regulations and completely strip the entrenched academy of its power. But in the long term the Salon des Refusés gave credence to the notion that it was an artist's inalienable right to show his work, and the public's right to judge the result; 1863 marked a point of no return. The Salon would sputter along with various reforms until it ceased to exist after 1880.

The influence of the Academy over the Salon system was such that even artists exempt from jury review experienced difficulties, not only with the critics but with government officials as well. The tale of Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux's essay in Michelangelo's *terribilità*, *Ugolino* (FIG. 6.36) is typical. Carpeaux had won the Prix de Rome, and during his residency at the Villa Medici in the late 1850s he conceived the monumental figure group. It was inspired by a story in Dante's *Divine Comedy* (Canto 33). For treachery, count Ugolino de' Gherardeschi of Pisa was sentenced to starvation in prison and was said to have cannibalized his sons, who had been confined with him. "A statue conceived by the bard of the Divine Comedy," wrote Carpeaux, "and created by the father of [the statue of] Moses [i.e., Michelangelo], now that would be a masterpiece of the human spirit."⁷³ Yet after viewing Carpeaux's realization in plaster, the professors of the Académie des Beaux-Arts determined that it was not

worthy of execution in a durable material, which was tantamount to consigning the work to oblivion. Carpeaux persisted and managed to have it cast in bronze in time for the 1863 Salon. Despite the academy's reservations, it won the first prize. Although the critics took shots at it, it was acquired by the state and eventually installed in the Tuileries gardens as a pendant to a copy of the *Laocoön*, its conceptual cousin. Thanks to a French quarry owner, Carpeaux, who had become popular at court, succeeded in realizing his original ambition to carve the group in marble (now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York). He exhibited the marble, this time to general approval, at the 1867 Exposition Universelle.

The *Birth of Venus*, the work of another court favorite, Alexandre Cabanel, became in retrospect the emblem of the 1863 Salon (FIG. 6.37). Cabanel, like Carpeaux a winner of the Prix de Rome, enjoyed several state commissions during the 1850s and obtained the Legion d'Honneur at the Exposition Universelle of 1855. His virtuosic drawing and flawless painting technique endeared him to the academy, as did his subject matter, redolent of the eighteenth-century taste for depictions of amorous gods. It was no surprise then that the emperor would buy the *Birth of Venus* for himself at the Salon. (That same year he also bought Charles-Auguste Arnaud's equally sensuous marble, *Venus of the Golden Hair* [Chateau de Compiègne], a vertical, three-dimensional realization of the Cabanel.) When Cabanel reexhibited his masterpiece in 1867, the young writer Emile Zola could not resist taking aim: "This happy artist has solved the problem of remaining serious and pleasing [at the same time]. . . . Take an antique Venus, any female body drawn with the holy rules [of the academy], and with a puff, lightly apply to the body make-up and rice powder. There you will have M. Cabanel's ideal."⁷⁴ It was precisely this powdery form of prurience that purchased Cabanel's success. Zola saw that the goddess, "drowned in a river of milk, had the air of a delicious tart, not of flesh and bones—that would be indecent—but in a sort of pink and white almond paste. There are some people who find this adorable doll well drawn and well modeled, and who declare her to be the daughter, more or less illegitimate, of the Venus de Milo: that is the judgment of serious people. There are others who marvel at the smile of the

doll, at the delicate limbs, at the voluptuous attitude: that is the judgment of less serious people. And all is for the best in the best of all the paintings in the world."⁷⁵ Zola's pointed remarks are undeniably apt, but underlying the sarcasm is his belief that Cabanel's triumph came at the expense of his friend Edouard Manet, whose *Déjeuner sur l'herbe* (FIG. 6.38) became the emblem of the Salon des Refusés.

Following the emperor's decision to create the Salon des Refusés, artists were given the choice to withdraw or to exhibit their rejected pictures. Of the several thousand refused, only 781 items—from all categories,

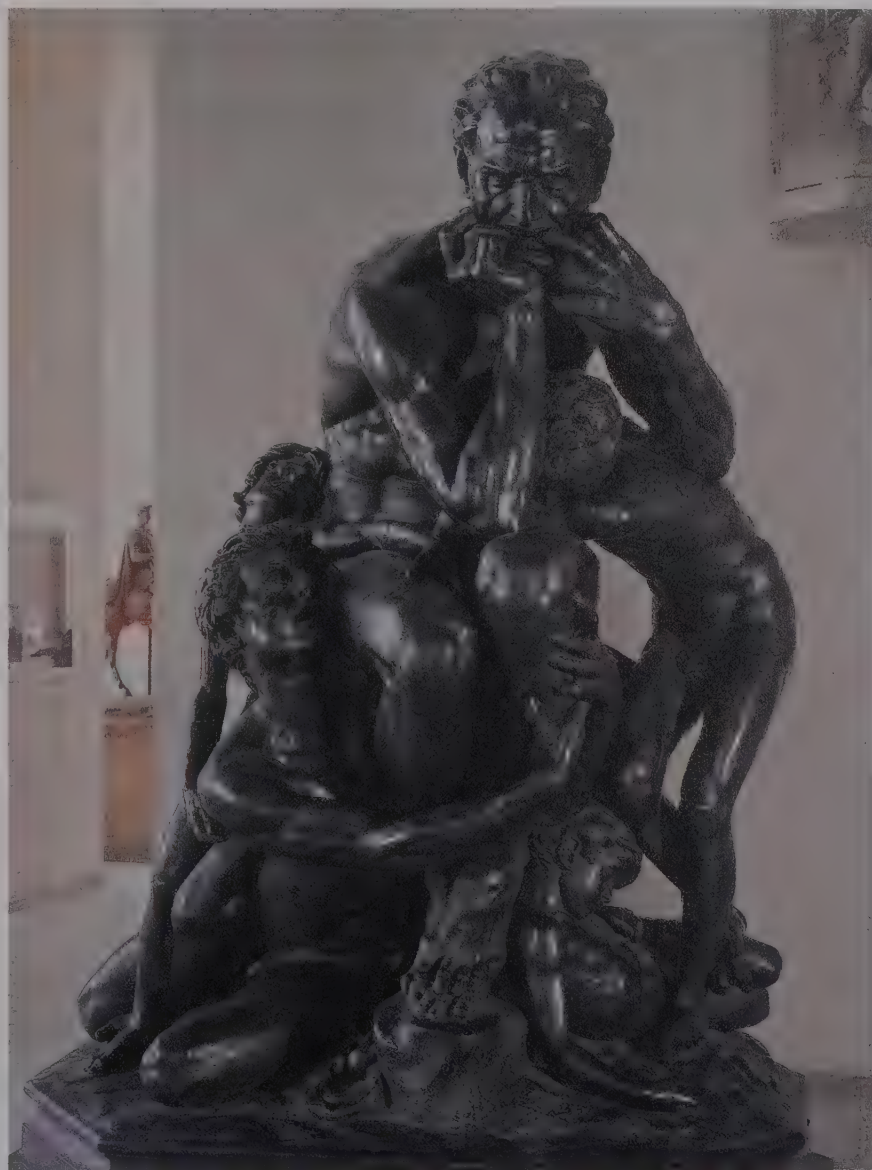
6.36

Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux
(1827–1875)

Ugolino, 1862

Bronze, 76 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 58 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 46 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(194 x 148 x 119 cm)

Musée d'Orsay



including sculpture and architecture—were shown in rooms adjacent to the Salon. Seven thousand people came on the first day, May 15, hoping to laugh. Zola reconstituted the event in a now-famous section of his book *L'Œuvre* (*The Masterpiece*):

It was all well set out; the setting quite as luxurious as that provided for the accepted pictures: tall, antique tapestry hangings in the doorways, exhibition panels covered with green serge, red velvet cushions on the benches, white cotton screens stretched under the skylights, and, at the first glance down the long succession of rooms, it looked very much like the official Salon, with the same gold frames, the same patches of colour for the pictures. But what was not immediately obvious, was the predominant liveliness of the atmosphere, the feeling of youth and brightness. The crowd, already dense, was growing every minute, for visitors were flocking away from the official Salon, goaded by curiosity, eager to judge the judges, convinced from the outset that they were going to enjoy themselves and see some extremely amusing things.⁷⁶

The emperor and many critics were sensitive to the fact that most of the pictures exhibited at the Refusés were no worse than those in the Salon. The celebrity adhering to Courbet, Manet, and their friends, however,

was such that they became the lightning rod for debate on the direction and value of contemporary art. Manet's audacious *Déjeuner* received more attention than he could have ever imagined, much of it scornful. A British writer, Philip G. Hamerton, wrote,

The principal absurdities among the refused pictures are [. . .] some queer things from the school of M. Courbet [and] a remarkable picture of the Realist school a translation of a thought of Giorgione into modern French. Giorgione had conceived the happy idea of a *fête champêtre*, in which although the gentlemen were dressed, the ladies were not, but the doubtful morality of the picture is pardoned for the sake of its fine colour, and it hangs not far from the *Marriage at Cana* in the noblest hall of the Louvre. But some wretched Frenchman [Manet] has translated this into modern French Realism on a much larger scale, and with the horrible modern French costume instead of the graceful old Venetian one. Yes, there they are, under the trees, the principal lady, entirely undressed, sitting calmly in the well-known attitude of Giorgione's Venetian woman, another female in a chemise coming out of a little stream that runs hard by, and two Frenchmen in wide-awakes sitting on the very green grass with a stupid look of bliss. There are other pictures of the same class that lead to the inference that the

6.37

Alexandre Cabanel
(1823–1889)

The Birth of Venus, 1863

Oil on canvas,
51 1/8 x 88 5/8 in.
(130 x 225 cm)
Musée d'Orsay





nude, when painted by vulgar men, is inevitably indecent. Cabanel's *Venus*, though wanton and lascivious, is not in the least indecent; neither is Paul Baudry's beautiful girl on the sea-beach—but these pictures are.⁷⁷

Hamerton argues that it was the (presumed) vulgarity of the painter that made the picture indecent, not the vulgarity of the nude. But even Théophile Thoré, who often admired Manet, found the painting “in questionable taste. The nude woman lacks beauty of form, unhappily . . . and the gentleman sprawled beside her is as unprepossessing as could be imagined. . . . I fail to see what can have induced a distinguished and intelligent artist to adopt so absurd a composition. Yet there are qualities of color and light in the landscape, and indeed very true bits of modeling in the torso of the woman.” Since Manet hung the *Déjeuner* between his *Standing*

Majo and *Mlle V in the Costume of an Espada* (both now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art), it seems clear that he intended to address the very question that Thoré posed. He conspicuously adopted motifs from the old masters (Giorgione, Goya, etc.) in order to reveal the startling artifice in much of the art commonly accepted as great. As Manet reputedly told his biographer, Antonin Proust, “I am told that I must do a nude. All right, I will. I’ll do them a nude. Back in our studio days, I copied Giorgione’s women, the women with musicians. That’s a dark picture. The background has retreated. I’m going to do it over, and do it in the transparency of the atmosphere, with figures like you see over there [Manet was enjoying a fine day on the banks of the Seine at Argenteuil]. I’ll take a beating; they’ll say I’m finding inspiration in the Italians now, instead of the Spanish.”⁷⁸

6.38

Edouard Manet
(1832–1883)

Déjeuner sur l'herbe,
1863

Oil on canvas,
83 1/4 x 105 5/8 in.
(208 x 264 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



The following year, Manet emphatically underscored his dual interest in Spanish and Italian painting. He submitted two pictures, one sacred, one secular; one a scene from antiquity, one a scene from modern life. The first was *Dead Christ with Angels* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York), based on compositions by Francisco de Ribalta and Paolo Veronese; the second was *Incident in the Bullring*, rooted in the work of Diego Velázquez and Francisco de Goya. Owing to Nieuwerkerke's reform of the Salon regulations, the jurors for 1864 and 1865 were not members of the Institut appointed by the government but artists elected by artists, although only those who had won medals at previous exhibitions could vote.⁷⁹ In order to make room for more exhibitors, artists were limited to two works each. The result, in 1864 and 1865, were liberal Salons, and Manet saw both his pictures hung.⁸⁰ Predictably, they were greeted with derision. What the establishment wanted, and what all but the most enlightened critics (such as Charles Baudelaire, Thoré, and Jules-Antoine Castagnary) endorsed, was grand history painting, paintings that could restore the luster to the French school that David and Ingres had burnished. What they got was Gustave Moreau. His *Oedipus and the Sphinx* and *Orpheus* (FIGS. 6.39 and 6.40) held the promise that the spirit of Ingres had been transmitted to his pupil Théodore Chassériau, who in turn entrusted it to his disciple Moreau. Maxime Du Camp, a traditionalist, urged that "it is to history painting, to grand painting that we must return under penalty of irremediable decadence; any tendency toward this end ought to be encouraged and applauded, and in this connection we find the example given by M. Gustave Moreau is respectable, meritorious, and of good augury, although his picture was not judged worthy of the grand medal which, in every respect, it deserved."⁸¹

To the Salon of 1865 Manet once again sent two paintings self-consciously derived from Old Master prototypes: *Christ Crowned with Thorns* (Art Institute of Chicago) and another nude, the great *Olympia* (FIG. 6.41). Once again, his display contrasted the sacred with the profane. He must have intended to provoke scandal, since he wrote his friend Baudelaire in March that he feared his paintings would be rejected. But when they were accepted and the scandal actually erupted, he turned again to Baudelaire for support. "I really

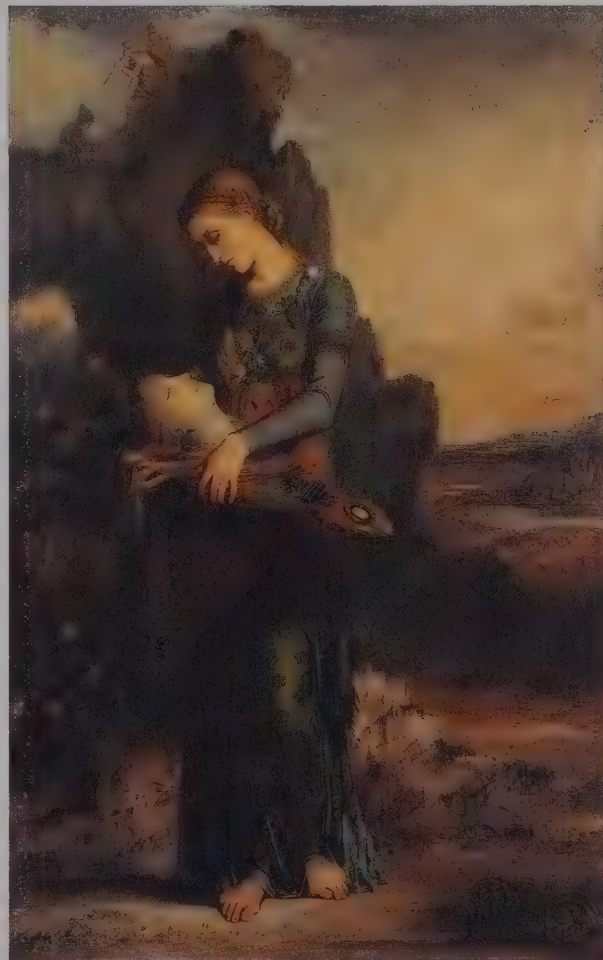
would like you here, dear Baudelaire; they are raining insults on me, I have never been led such a dance. . . . I should have liked your sane verdict on my pictures, for all these cries have set me on edge, and it's clear that someone must be wrong."⁸² Baudelaire, annoyed at Manet's whining, responded tartly, "What you ask for is truly stupid. People are making fun of you, pleasantries set you on edge, no one does you justice, etc. Do you think that you are the first to be placed in this position? Have you more genius than Chateaubriand and Wagner?" Although Baudelaire conveyed the compliment of an acquaintance—"He added that the picture representing the nude woman, with the Negress and the cat (is it a cat, really?) was much superior to the religious picture"—he informed Manet cryptically that he was "only the first in the decrepitude of your art."⁸³ Whatever he meant by this remark, the evidence of his art criticism suggests that the writer's sympathies lay with the Romantic painters, and that while he admired certain qualities in the work of the young Realists, such as Courbet and Manet, he also recognized, now that Delacroix was dead, that their work foretold the end of the art that he had championed so fervently.

The abuse that *Olympia* received was almost universal, so much so that it is easy to imagine that that is why Nieuwerkerke allowed the painting to be hung.⁸⁴ Few critics commented upon Manet's source in Titian's *Venus of Urbino*; most instead preferred to opine on the propriety of the subject and speculate on which class of prostitute Manet represented. Since she was clearly made of flesh and bones, to paraphrase Zola, she must be indecent. Was she a lowly streetwalker—witness her "yellow" belly and "dirty" contours—or was she truly a courtesan, as suggested by her personal maid and the rich accessories? The rising influence of certain powerful courtesans, not least on the emperor himself, had become emblematic of social decay for those who, on the right, wished a return to monarchy, or, on the left, to a republic. Manet's picture touched a nerve. No one doubted that the (female) nude was an appropriate vehicle for grand painting, and sexual appeal was an unspoken but highly valued component of art—hence the success of Cabanel's *Venus*. But for those critics who could see past the subject, the principal argument concerned Manet's actual style. The absence of glazes, semi-tones, and shadows and the presence of thick,

impasted paint was considered by Manet's detractors to be the sure sign of decrepitude in art, for reasons very different from Baudelaire's. Just as at the Salon and the Refusés of 1863, the primary battle at the Salon of 1865 was fought by conservative jurors and critics who vainly hoped to maintain a state-sponsored style, embodied in the work of Baudry, Cabanel, and Gérôme, against the growing strength of Realist painters, who, like Manet, followed the path of Courbet.

There is good reason to think that even Courbet felt threatened by the attention that Manet received. As if to respond to the fame of Cabanel's *Venus* and the notoriety of Manet's *Déjeuner*, Courbet prepared for the Salon of 1864 a picture that would outstrip both works for prurience and shock value. Amazingly, *Venus and Psyche* (now lost) was accepted and briefly hung. It showed a corpulent, naked, life-size Venus kneeling on a disheveled bed, lifting the curtains to observe at close

6.39 (opposite)
Gustave Moreau
(1826–1898)
Oedipus and the Sphinx,
1864
Oil on canvas,
81¼ x 41¼ in.
(206.4 x 104.8 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York; bequest of
William H. Herriman,
1920



6.40
Gustave Moreau
(1826–1898)
Orpheus, 1866
Oil on wood,
60⅞ x 39¼ in.
(154 x 99.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

hand Psyche's impeccable nudity. Though it could not be named, at least one clever critic associated the lesbian encounter with Baudelaire's "femmes damnées." But Courbet's bid for scandal was preempted by the empress, for when she saw the painting during her special preview, she insisted that it be removed. Temporarily chastened, Courbet did not submit a nude to the Salon of 1865, exhibiting instead the portrait of the socialist philosopher Pierre-Joseph Proudhon and a satire on the clergy, *The Return from the Conference*. However, for the next year Courbet intended to respond to the celebrity of Manet's woman with a cat. Over the summer of 1865 he excerpted the sprawling figure of Psyche from his earlier work to make a new independent picture, a woman with a parrot (FIG. 6.42). In a misguided attempt to purchase the artist's cooperation,

Nieuwerkerke told Courbet during a studio visit that he would buy the new painting for 10,000 francs, so long as he did not make any significant changes. The artist took him at his word, and even went so far as to make a written request to Nieuwerkerke to retouch the painting before the Salon of 1866 opened, since he considered it Nieuwerkerke's property.

Nieuwerkerke did not respond to Courbet's request, but he gave the place of honor to Courbet's two submissions to the 1866 Salon, *Woman with a Parrot* and a hunting scene: they were hung in the center of the wall in the principal gallery, facing all entering visitors. According to Manet's friend Adolphe Tabarant, "Seeing M. Courbet's triumphant air...spectators remarked to one another that the Senator and Superintendent [Nieuwerkerke] was not a man to put his money on the

6.41

Edouard Manet
(1832–1883)

Olympia, 1863

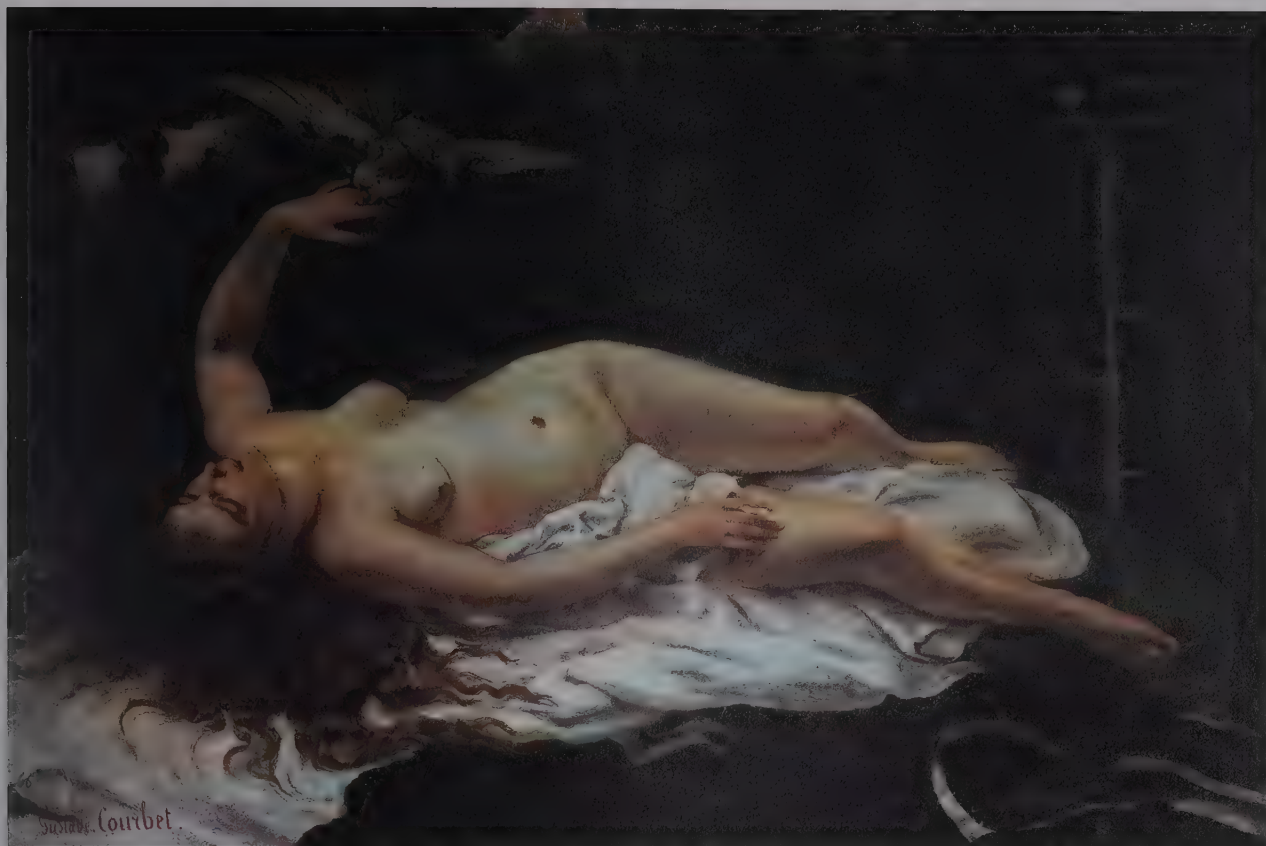
Oil on canvas.

51 7/8 x 74 1/4 in.

(130.5 x 190 cm)

Musée d'Orsay





wrong horse, and at the sight of the two works so imperatively honoured there was no choice but to bow, admire and applaud. . . . What a chorus of praise broke out in the newspapers.”⁸⁵ Several critics, however, implied that with this lascivious nude Courbet had sold out to conventional taste. Even his faithful supporter Thoré remarked sarcastically, “Well, my dear Courbet, you are done for now, your good times are over! Here you are accepted, bemedalled, decorated, glorified and embalmed!” But all was not what it seemed. For reasons unknown, Nieuwerkerke reneged on his offer. Rather than purchasing the painting for himself at 10,000 francs, the superintendent proposed to have the government acquire the painting for 6,000 francs. Courbet was incensed. He demanded copies of his correspondence with Nieuwerkerke, took his case to the press, and threatened to sue in court. Nieuwerkerke responded slowly and inadequately, recalling Courbet’s well-known hostility to the government to suggest that the artist was an irredeemable ingrate. Because of the scandal, Courbet did not receive the medal that the prominent placement of his display would have guaranteed for any other artist.

In retrospect, one can see that the failure of Courbet to obtain his well-deserved reward had larger ramifications. The Salon of 1866 was the first to which most

of the young artists loosely grouped around Courbet and Manet submitted pictures: Frédéric Bazille, Paul Cézanne, Degas, Henri Fantin-Latour, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Alfred Sisley. But that year the jury was exceptionally strict. Manet’s pictures—the innocuous *Young Fifer* (Musée d’Orsay) and the Velázquez-like *Tragic Actor* (National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C.) were inexplicably rejected, Cézanne’s brutalist pictures more understandably so. Bazille and Renoir each had the most important of their two pictures rejected. Yet Degas’s *Fallen Jockey* was hung; both of Monet’s pictures, a Manet-like figure painting, *Camille* (Kunsthalle Hamburg), and a landscape, were accepted, as were Sisley and Pissarro landscapes. The Salon of 1866 might have been the first Salon of the phenomenon that would soon be known as the New Painting—later to be called Impressionism. But the conservative jury ensured that would not be the case. And they denied Courbet the medal that would have crowned the apostle of Realism. Emile Zola, a young journalist and close friend of Cézanne’s, wrote an inflammatory article that excoriated the jury by name, one by one. It made his reputation as an art critic, and set the stage for the critical response to the Salon of 1867 and the Exposition Universelle.

6.42

Gustave Courbet
(1819–1877)

Woman with a Parrot,
1866

Oil on canvas, 51 x 77
in. (129.5 x 195.6 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, New
York; H. O. Havemeyer
Collection, bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer,
1929

THE 1867 EXPOSITION UNIVERSELLE



6.43

Edouard Manet
(1832-1883)

*View of the Exposition
Universelle of 1867, 1867*

Oil on canvas,
43½ x 77⅞ in.
(108 x 196.5 cm)

Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo



The 1867 Exposition Universelle must be counted as one of the most glorious triumphs of the Second Empire. It was physically the largest fair ever held, displayed in an ungainly set of concentric ovals designed in metal and glass by Frédéric Le Play (working closely with the engineer Jean-Baptiste Krantz and Gustave Eiffel), covering 165 acres on the Champs de Mars, across from the Chaillot hill (FIG. 6.44). In contrast to the classically styled masonry structure built for fine arts at the 1855 fair, the aesthetic for the entire complex was industrial and eclectically modern in 1867. And this time, the organizing committee was composed not of intellectuals and notables but of industrialists and bankers with commercial interests: the fair was officially a commercial entity independent of the state, although the minister of state, Eugène Rouher, and the minister of the interior, marshal Jean-Baptiste-Philibert Vaillant, represented the government and the emperor.

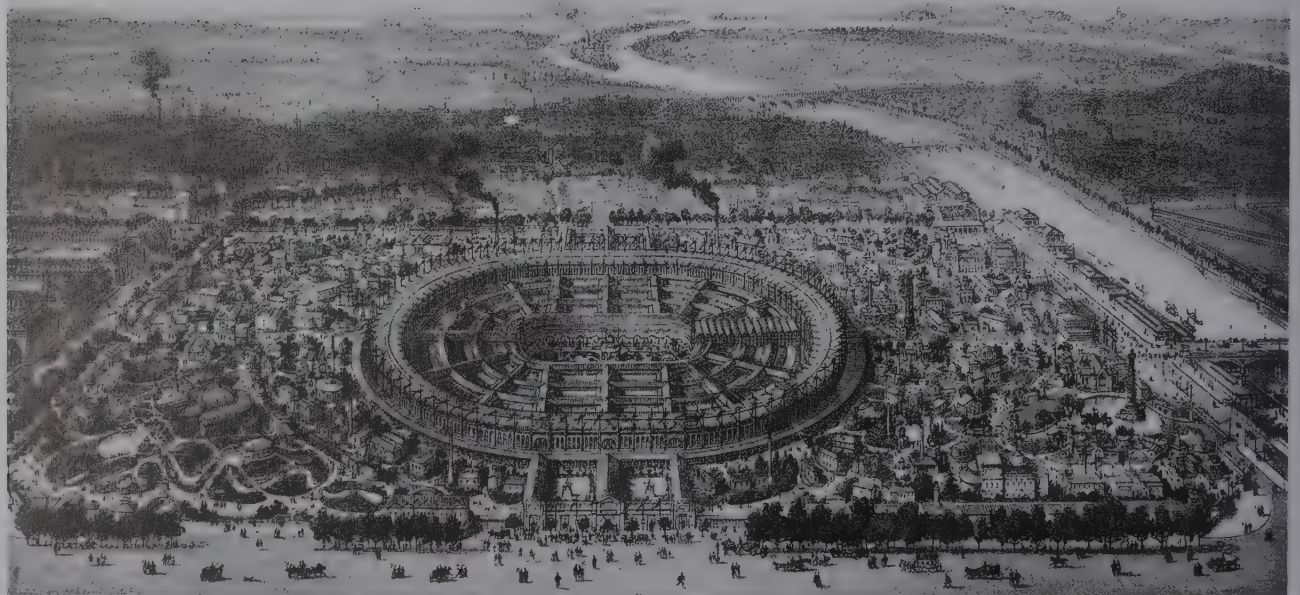
The vast Hall of Machines occupied the outer oval. In turn it was surrounded by iron and glass pavilions housing cafés and restaurants that opened onto the parklike setting when weather allowed; the park itself

was filled with colorful pavilions erected by the exhibiting countries. (One critic fumed, "No matter where you enter, the long line of refreshment stands embraces the main building with a belt of bottles, hams, and lobsters and gives the whole affair the vulgar air of a market-place."⁸⁶) A great hydraulic elevator lifted visitors to the roof so they could survey the acres of glass sheltering the inner rings. These rings housed the exhibits, which were organized in a manner that reflected the French encyclopedic impulse. The chief commissioner, Le Play, explained that "the Imperial Commission had, as its point of departure, a methodical classification, at whose base there is a double grouping of products: by the nature of the objects, and by their nationality. This condition has been achieved by a circular arrangement with two systems of division. The first is formed by concentric zones, which will house similar products of all nations; the second, of radiating sections, each one given over to a particular nation."⁸⁷ The classification system (derived from a different system at the 1862 London fair) is a fascinating testimony of the relative status given at that time to various human endeavors. The outer ring was devoted to machinery, the inner ones to the gradual

6.44

The Elliptical Grand Palais and the Pavilions of the Champs-de-Mars, 1876

Engraving



development of civilization, beginning with the Stone Age and proceeding to the present. As the critic Paul Mantz observed, “Material things occupy the first ring, and with each circle crossed, you approach the spiritual.”⁸⁸

Attendance surpassed all expectations: nearly 7 million visitors passed through the gates, in contrast to the already impressive 4 million that had attended the 1855 fair.⁸⁹ As Paul Greenhalg has recently suggested, this figure was the direct result of the Emperor’s decision to bring the rural peasantry to Paris to show them the promise of his empire.⁹⁰ He offered free travel for the poor, and free lodging for 57,000 people was available at the fairgrounds. There was, for the first time, an amusement park, and the fair was the first to be open at night. As part of his program to woo the left, the emperor had in 1864 given workers the right to associate and to strike; he established the theme of the 1867 exhibition as “the history of labor.” He encouraged workers’ organizations to maintain a high profile at the fair, and he himself submitted a display of ideal worker

housing to Group X, “Articles to improve the physical and moral conditions of the people,” a contribution that, to no one’s surprise, won a grand prize. The emperor had gambled that he could solidify his popularity in the provinces, his electoral base, with a double policy of liberal concessions and outright inducements. He was right: Paris was inundated with provincials. A snobbish American, Henry Adams, lamented that he “could not detect a single refined-looking human being” at the fair.⁹¹ Although subsequent writers have been quick to see signs of the fragility of the regime in advance of the catastrophic war with Prussia, and while several unfortunate events occurred over the summer—the failure of the French expedition in Mexico, an attempt on the czar’s life in Paris—those signs were nowhere visible when the fair opened on April 1, 1867. Napoleon III presided over the greatest fair ever held, and all of France exuded pride. Pace Henry Adams, the crowned heads of Europe came to marvel at the newly transformed City of Lights—La Ville Lumière—and to stay at the newly opened, “American-style”



6.45

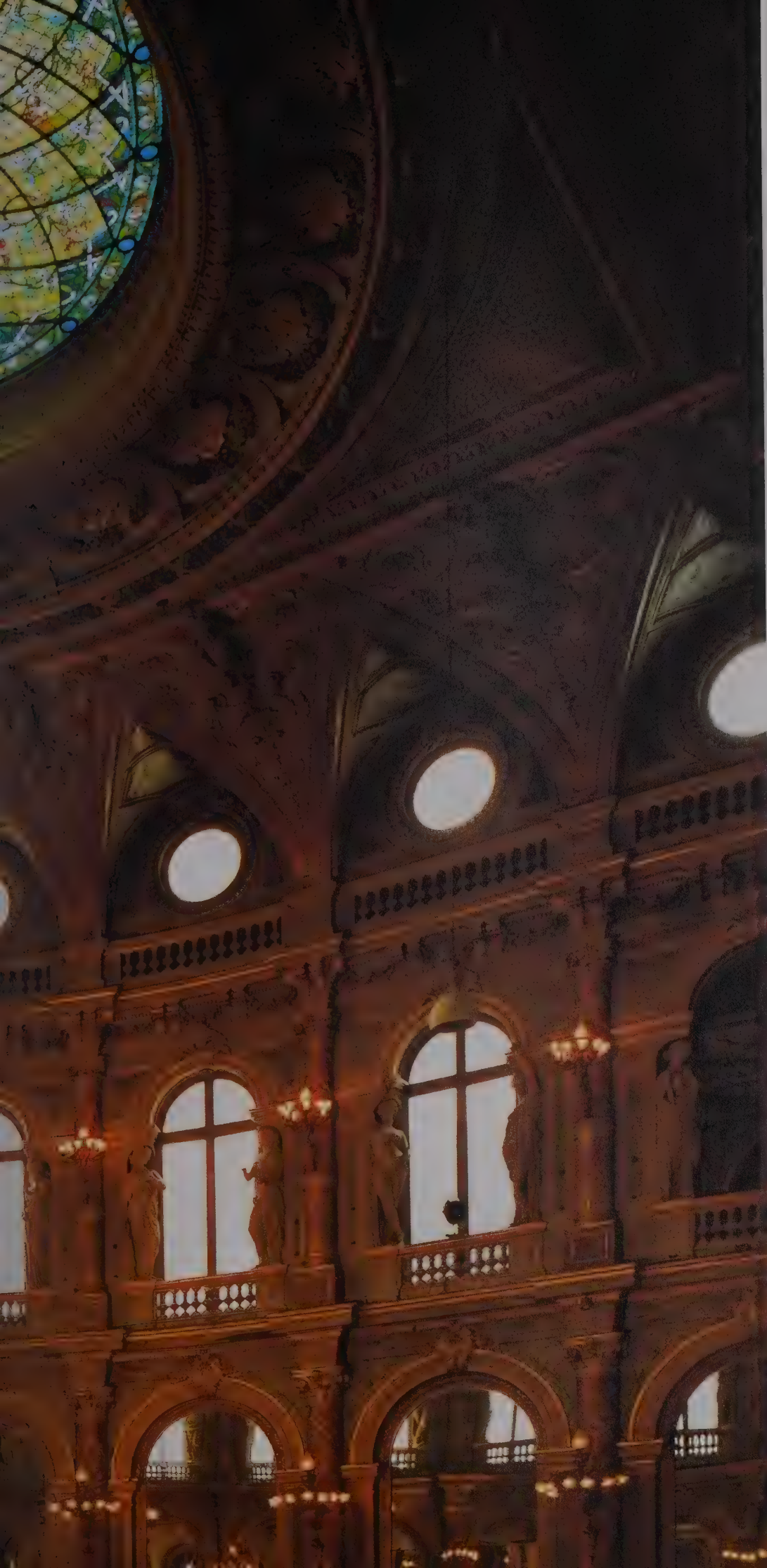
Anonymous

The Grand Hotel, after
1862

Lithograph, 13 x 20 in.
(32.5 x 49.9 cm)

Musée Carnavalet





6.46

Alfred-Eugène Armand
(1805–1888), architect,
assisted by Charles
Garnier (1825–1898)
The Ballroom of the
Grand Hotel, constructed
in anticipation of
the 1867 Exposition
Universelle, 1862



6.47
 Pierre-Auguste Renoir
 (1841–1919)
The Pont des Arts,
 1867–68
 Oil on canvas,
 24½ x 40½ in.
 (61.6 x 102.9 cm)
 The Norton-Simon
 Foundation, Pasadena,
 California

palatial hotels (FIGS. 6.45 and 6.46). Even Victor Hugo, self-declared enemy of “Napoléon le petit,” trumpeted the exhibition in an essay addressed to “the Peoples of Europe” and to the “Future.” Indeed, in his remarkable text written for the guide to the exhibition, Hugo defined his vision of a united Europe in a way that sounds uncannily like the modern European Union; the consistency of French ambition from the reign of Louis XIV to that of Napoleon I, from the reign of Napoleon III to those of Charles de Gaulle and François Mitterand, is striking.

In the twentieth century, there will be an extraordinary nation. This nation will be large, but that will not prevent it from being free. It will be illustrious, thoughtful, peaceful and cordial with the rest of humanity... There will no longer be restraints; no

tolls at bridges, no tolls at the city limits, no customs duties paid to states... It will no longer be a nation, it will be a civilization; it will be better than civilization, it will be a family. Unity of language, unity of currency, unity of measure, unity of meridian, unity of [civil] code... Nowhere will there be hindrance, everywhere there will be the norm. The normal college; the normal workshop; the normal warehouse; the normal boutique; the normal farm; the normal theater; normal publicity; and beside everything, liberty. The freedom of the human heart respected in the same manner as liberty of the human spirit, to love being as sacred as to think... With circulation multiplied tenfold, production and consumption will increase a hundredfold. The multiplication of bread, the loaves of the miracle, will become a reality. This is what this nation will be. It will have Paris for its



capital. It will no longer be called France, it will be called Europe. It will be called Europe in the twentieth century, and in the following centuries, still more transformed, it will call itself Humanity. Humanity, the definitive nation, from this point will be understood by thinkers, those who contemplate shadows, but the nineteenth century will assist in the formation of Europe. Before having its people, Europe has its city. For this people who do not yet exist, its capital is already here.⁹²

Even artists who were excluded from the fair—Manet, Monet, and Renoir—could not resist celebrating their capital with views of the city newly renovated to receive the acclamation of Humanity (FIGS. 6.43, 6.47, 6.48).

Hugo could well indulge his vision of a peaceful utopia. The heaviest display at the fair, “Big Will,” Krupp’s fifty-ton steel cannon, capable of lobbing ship-crushing, thousand-pound shells, slumbered noiselessly in the Prussian section. (Until Krupp, cannons had

6.48

Claude Monet
(1840–1926)

*Saint-Germain
l’Auxerrois*, 1867

Oil on canvas,
31 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 39 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(79 x 98 cm)

Neue Nationalgalerie,
Berlin

6.50 (right)

Jean-Marie-Ferdinand
Régnier (1810–1892)

Luncheon set
manufactured at Sèvres,
1851–61 (designed 1832)

Hard-paste porcelain,
diameter: 19 7/8 in.
(49.9 cm)

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art; gift
of Helen Boehm
in memory of her late
husband. Edward
Marshall Boehm

always been cast in bronze.) For Hugo, “these enormous shells, hurled from the gigantic Krupp cannons, will be no more effective in stopping progress than soap bubbles blown from the mouth of a child.”⁹³ (In just three years the cannon would return to the outskirts of Paris to pound the capital into humiliating submission.) Naturally, the Goncourts resented “The World’s Fair, the final blow in the Americanization of France, industry triumphing over art, the steam engine reigning in place of the painting.” But the public was understandably fascinated by Big Will: “Only monstrous war machines are capable of captivating the public’s attention. . . . the ladies themselves do not want to hear about anything else except the gigantic, deafening works of modern artillery.”⁹⁴



The theme of the exhibition, “the history of labor,” was expressed in a highly peculiar manner. One might expect dioramas showing the development of agricultural implements or mechanized weaving looms; instead the organizers gathered, in the French section alone, some five thousand objects constituting “the most unique assemblage of curiosities” ever assembled.⁹⁵ Like the fair itself, this display was organized into sections, here representing stages of French history, from Gaul before the use of metals to the reign of Louis XVI and the Revolution. Although some of the objects were tools used in labor, such as prehistoric hatchets, the majority were rare and precious examples of the luxury arts, whether Carolingian jewels, Gothic ivories, Renaissance caskets, Limoges enamels, Nevers and Rouen ceramics, or porcelains from Vincennes, Saint-Cloud, and Sèvres (FIG. 6.50). In this way the organizers provided a historical context to provide a flattering frame for the French exhibitors—makers of modern luxury goods meant to rival if not exceed the production of the past. If future fairs would be characterized by specific styles—Art Nouveau in 1900 or Art Deco in 1937—in 1867 the dominant style was historicism, hence the relevance of the museological display. All earlier epochs were fair game, as the exposition enshrined a development gathering steam since the beginning of the century. And many of the most successful works of art, such as Paul Dubois’s silver-plated bronze *Florentine Singer* (FIG. 6.49) more closely resembled finely fabricated luxury goods than ambitious art. Dubois’s plaster won



6.49

Paul Dubois
(1829–1905)

*Florentine Singer of the
Fifteenth Century*, 1865

Silver-plated bronze,
61 x 22 1/4 x 19 1/4 in.
(155 x 58 x 50 cm)
Musée d’Orsay



the grand prize at the Salon of 1865, and Nieuwerkerke and princess Mathilde fought over who would obtain the first cast in bronze. Mathilde won, but Nieuwerkerke had his cast, shown here, silvered. When it was reexhibited in 1867 it became so popular that it was cast in bronze in six different sizes, as well as in wax, terra-cotta, and porcelain, in three sizes.

During a period of intense nationalism, it is not surprising to find Ferdinand Barbedienne's retrospective look at Cellini and the exquisite mannerism of the school of Fontainebleau in the tour-de-force *Miroir Monumentale* (FIG. 6.51), but who could have imagined a Merovingian revival? The cabinet exhibited by Charles-Guillaume Diehl, a cabinetmaker, and Brandely, a bronze founder, with reliefs by the sculptor Emmanuel Frémiet, was unquestionably the most novel furnishing exhibited in 1867 (FIG. 6.52).⁹⁶ The widespread economic boom of the Second Empire encouraged the collecting of historical objects and antique furnishings on a scale unknown in previous eras; for the first time, the bourgeoisie became a major force in this domain. Rather than encouraging the development of a new, modern style—such as the Empire style under Napoleon I—manufacturers mined a gamut of historical styles to provide furnishings that could complement collections of eclectic and disparate objects.⁹⁷ The empress herself set an example by decorating her private rooms with objects “borrowed” from the Louvre, mixing Louis XV fauteuils with Louis XVI commodes, placing throughout the ubiquitous tufted armchair called

a *confortable*. Today, this mode of interior decoration is known as *le goût Rothschild*. While the French Rothschilds achieved prominence under Louis-Philippe and were closely allied to his regime, it was during the Second Empire that the primary expression of their taste in the domain of decoration, the chateau of Ferrières, outside Paris, was completed. At the Exposition Universelle, exhibitors vied with one another to attract



6.51 (above, left)
Ferdinand Barbedienne
(1810–1892)
Miroir Monumentale, 1867
Glass and chiseled and
gilded bronze, 76 x 54 in.
(193 x 137 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

6.52 (above)
Charles-Guillaume Diehl
(1811–c. 1885) with
Emmanuel Frémiet (1824–1910)
and Jean Brandely
Medal cabinet in the
Merovingian style, 1867
Bronze, silver mounts, and wood
veneers, 93¼ x 59½ x 23⅞ in.
(238 x 151 x 60 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



6.53

Jean-Léon Gérôme
(1824–1904)

After the Masked Ball,
1867

Oil on canvas,
20 x 28¹/₁₆ in.
(50 x 72 cm)

Musée Condé, Chantilly

the attention of the imperial family and notables such as the Rothschilds, as well as to induce middle-class clients to buy cheaper versions of their wares.

The Fine Arts

By most accounts, the fine arts display was not a success. The problems began with Nieuwerkerke's halfhearted attempt to placate the Académie by offering it one-third of the jury. The Académie refused, citing the fact that before 1863 it had stood as the supreme arbiter of artistic judgment; how could it now accept a diminished role? Instead the jury was once again elected by artists who had previously received honors, and Nieuwerkerke, the president of the jury, named several critics and collectors to round out the panel. Despite the academy's abstention, the elected jurors represented academic taste: Baudry, Cabanel, Couture, Gérôme, the aged Ingres, Ernest Meissonier, Isidore Pils, and so on; only a few

naturalists or Realists, such as Jules Breton and Théodore Rousseau, were elected. Artists were asked to submit works created since the 1855 fair, and the jury seized the occasion to create mini-retrospectives of their own careers. The jurors reserved for themselves some 550 places out of 700 accepted works of art. Meissonier showed fourteen works; Gérôme showed fourteen; Jules Dupré, twelve; Bouguereau, Breton, and Rosa Bonheur, ten. (Bonheur could not obtain the loan of her celebrated *Horse Fair* [New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art], which she hoped the state would purchase from its rich American owner.) Rousseau exhibited eight; Corot seven; but the Realist Courbet sent three minor works, and Millet was excluded altogether, as were all of Courbet's followers, such as Manet, Monet, and Renoir.⁹⁸ The press tried to create an intrigue around an alleged rivalry between Meissonier and Gérôme (FIG. 6.53) for top honors, but in reality the exhibition was a narrow, partisan, and predominantly French affair; few apart from those involved concerned themselves



6.54

Alexandre-Georges-Henri Regnault (1843–1871)

Automedon and the Horse of Achilles, 1868

Oil on canvas, 124 x 129½ in. (315 x 329 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; gift by subscription



6.55
 Pierre Puvis de
 Chavannes (1824–1898)
War, 1867
 Oil on canvas,
 43 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 59 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
 (109 x 148 cm)
 Philadelphia Museum
 of Art; John G. Johnson
 Collection

with the result. The four top medals went to Cabanel, Gérôme, Meissonier, and the aged Realist Rousseau. A British critic summed it up: “The art of picture making has not advanced since 1855.”⁹⁹ A French critic elaborated: “Perhaps the sum of the talent is the same, and the wealth of artworks is at least equal. But if the great summons which sounded from one end of the world to another has made thousands of artists appear, it has unfortunately revealed no man of genius. . . . The whole is dull, colorless, without accent, and this general mediocrity once more attests to the universal stampede, the confusion of genres, and the disorder and poverty of spirit.” Thoré concurred: “It is true that grand art has hardly any representative in the French school, perhaps because grand art, disengaging itself from the past, still

looks for a new inspiration and for the forms that will translate modern life.”¹⁰⁰ As Thoré reminded his readers, another factor contributed to the lifelessness of the display: the great Ingres had died just before the opening of the fair, and an enormous posthumous retrospective—the largest ever held—was mounted at the École des Beaux-Arts. Critics and artists alike searched for a new figure to assume Ingres’s place, and came up short: “The past being dead, let us look to console ourselves with the present, and above all, let us hope for the future.”¹⁰¹

Many conservative critics thought that the young Henri Regnault was the sole hope for grand painting. A student of Cabanel and a winner of the Prix de Rome in 1866, his first great success, *Automedon with the Horse of Achilles* (FIG. 6.54), reflected his enthusiasm for

Roman baroque art as well as the flashy brushwork of his new friend, the Spanish painter Mariano Fortuny. Those same conservative critics mourned Regnault's death in 1871, while fighting for France against the Prussians, as a national loss. Pierre Puvis de Chavannes was perhaps the only French artist exhibiting in the Exposition Universelle with any legitimate claim to the grand manner of classical painting. He showed variants of four compositions that he had developed in the early 1860s: *Rest, Peace, Work, and War* (FIG. 6.55). With subjects that embodied abstract themes, compositions derived from Raphael and Poussin, and chalky colors that evoked early Renaissance frescoes or, more recently, the murals by Chassériau at the Cour des Comptes, Puvis was weaving a classical mantle for himself. The critic Philippe Burty wrote, "I have not seen anyone, since the death of Delacroix, who has had more noble and refined ideas and who has expressed them with greater candor and fewer concessions to vulgarity."¹⁰² Artists with an affinity for classicism, such as Degas, Paul Gauguin, and even Pablo Picasso, would continue to draw inspiration from Puvis well into the twentieth century.

Since it was well known that Nieuwerkerke fully intended to control the fine arts at the Exposition Universelle, the only hope for young artists was the Salon, which, owing to space limitations at the fair, was held as usual. The jury was elected according to the now predictable formula, resulting in a jury nearly identical to that for the fair, but their severity was not to be anticipated. "Never in the memory of artists has a jury been more severe," wrote Castagnary. "Out of the 3,000 artists who sent work, 2,000 have been refused."¹⁰³ All of the young Realists of the New Painting—Bazille, Cézanne, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley—were rejected. Only Degas saw his work displayed. A petition for a Salon des Refusés was launched, and rejected. Facing what seemed to be implacable opposition, the young Realists began to make alternative plans, meeting in working quarters like that depicted by Frédéric Bazille in his 1870 *The Artist's Studio* (FIG. 6.56). Bazille wrote his mother to say that "a dozen talented young men" have decided "to rent a large studio each year where we will show our works, as many as we please. We will invite painters we like to send their works. Courbet, Corot, Diaz, Daubigny, and

many others whom you may not know promised to send us pictures and strongly approved our idea. With these people and Monet, the strongest of all, we are certain to succeed."¹⁰⁴ Thus was born the idea that became, in 1874, the first Impressionist exhibition.

After the debacle in 1866 over *Woman with a Parrot*, Courbet dared not take any chances with Nieuwerkerke and risk rejection. As in 1855, he built his own pavilion, his "personal Louvre," as he called it. "This time," he wrote, "I will set up a definitive atelier for the rest of my life and will send almost nothing to the exhibitions of the Government that has always treated me so badly."¹⁰⁵ Claude Monet, himself subjected to the capricious will of the jury, was deeply impressed: "Courbet's exhibition opens a week from today. . . . Can you imagine that he has invited all the artists of Paris for the opening; he has sent three thousand invitations, and for each artist he has enclosed a catalog."¹⁰⁶ Those who attended the opening saw that the most important of the 150 works—such as the *The Painter's Studio*, the *Burial at Ornans*, the *Demoiselles du Village*—had already been exhibited at previous salons. One new painting stood out, an immense *Death of the Stag* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Besançon), showing the noble beast cornered by hunters and beset by hounds. As Jane Roos and others have suggested, Courbet, the eternal victim, may well have wished to encourage the public to consider his plight analogous to that of the stag.¹⁰⁷ The artist's advocates, Thore and Castagnary, wrote laudatory reviews, but the press was largely indifferent, and as a commercial venture the exhibition was a failure: Paul Mantz said that he was always alone in the pavilion. Eager for publicity, Courbet prosecuted his ticket taker for theft of his receipts, claiming that he was missing 5,000 francs (entry was one franc per person); the poor man, a former Zouave, was sentenced to two years in jail. This final fiasco suggested to many that Courbet's days of glory were over; his time of troubles was about to begin. "God," Monet wrote, "Courbet has pulled out some bad paintings. He really harmed himself, for he had enough beautiful works and did not need to show everything."¹⁰⁸ But many aspects of his work would continue to resonate in the work of young painters like Monet, Sisley, Cézanne, and Pissarro. For example, the remarkable set of snowscapes, white on white, that Courbet exhibited

in 1867 set the example for a new genre of Impressionist landscape.

Manet took the same gamble that Courbet did, and borrowed 18,300 francs from his mother to erect his own pavilion near the Pont de l'Alma, a short distance upstream from the Exposition Universelle.¹⁰⁹ He wrote Zola early in 1867, "I have so little confidence in our judges that I wouldn't dream of sending them my pictures. They could easily play me the trick of accepting just one or two, and then, as far as the public is

concerned, I might as well throw the rest away. I've decided to hold a one-man exhibition. I have at least forty-odd pictures I can show, and have already been offered sites in very good locations near the Champ de Mars. I'm going to go all out, and with the support of people like you, it should be a success."¹¹⁰ Although the recent treatment of Manet had been painfully inconsistent—rejected in 1863, accepted in 1864 and 1865, rejected in 1866—the record overall seems less discriminatory. Between his first submission in 1859 and his

6.56

Frédéric Bazille
(1841–1870)

The Artist's Studio, 1870

Oil on canvas,
38 1/8 x 50 1/8 in.
(98 x 128 cm)
Musée d'Orsay





death in 1883, there were twenty-one Salons. Twice, Manet did not submit works; he was completely rejected from four, but exhibited in all the others. Only eight of the thirty-four paintings that he submitted were rejected.¹¹¹ This may not seem excessive today, but for most of the nineteenth century, any artist would have expected to exhibit as a matter of course once he had earned a distinction. To exhibit was to contend for prizes, public commissions, and private purchases. The private art dealer system was in its infancy, and therefore it was almost impossible for an artist to earn a living outside official patronage. Indeed, after rejection at the Salon of 1866, a forty-year-old artist named Holtzapffel (who had exhibited continuously since the 1850s) committed suicide, leaving a note saying that since his work was not good enough to be exhibited, he had no reason to live. "The members of the jury do not know me. . . . I had neither friends nor enemies among them. . . . they reject me, hence I have no talent. I must die."¹¹² Following the tradition established by Ingres (who had always had his work accepted, but who resented the inevitable criticism engendered by public display),

Manet exhibited his rejected paintings in his own studio in 1866. But for the special occasion of the Exposition Universelle, when all of Europe was expected in Paris, he wanted to make a major statement.

Manet exhibited all of his then infamous compositions—*Le Dejeuner sur l'herbe*, *Olympia*, *Mlle V. in the Costume of an Espada*—as well as more innocuous but equally disputed works such as *Music in the Tuileries* (FIG. 6.57) and the *Young Fifer*. With this display of some fifty canvases, it was clear that Manet was attempting to show that he could resuscitate grand painting—rescue it from the genre painters Gérôme and Meissonier—and paint contemporary subjects. This extraordinary goal, tantamount to the renovation of modern art, had been Manet's ambition since the beginning of the 1860s. As Paul Mantz wrote in 1863, "With his instinctive courage, M. Manet has stepped into the realm of the impossible."¹¹³ Quite specifically, Manet sought to answer the challenge set out by Baudelaire in his appreciation of the work of Constantin Guys, *The Painter of Modern Life*, which, though written earlier, was published in 1863. Baudelaire exhorted "the

6.57

Edouard Manet
(1832–1883)

Music in the Tuileries,
1862

Oil on canvas,
30½ x 47¼ in.
(76.2 x 118.1 cm)
National Gallery,
London



6.58

Edouard Manet
(1832-1883)

A Young Lady in 1866,
1866

Oil on canvas,
72 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 50 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(185.1 x 128.6 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York; gift of
Erwin Davis, 1889



heroism of modern life,” singling out Constantin Guys as the exemplary “Painter of Modern Life” in a famous essay with that title (FIG. 6.59). In 1867, Manet’s response was visible. In paintings that self-consciously evoked Old Master prototypes, he treated contemporary subjects in a manner that was as novel as it was salubrious. With none of Courbet’s recent pandering to academic taste, Manet insisted on his unpolished but highly sophisticated sketchlike technique and concentrated on his forte, exquisite passages of delicately nuanced values. Such was one of the most recent paintings that Manet exhibited, *A Young Lady in 1866* (FIG. 6.58). It was a monumental reply to Courbet’s *Woman with a Parrot* (see FIG. 6.42); one critic even wrote that the parrot seems to have been lent “by his friend

Courbet.”¹⁴ As if to say that sensuality resides in the mind and not in the flesh, Manet showed Victorine Meurent buttoned to the neck in a dressing gown—a prelude to nudity—and concocted an elaborate allegory of the senses: taste (the orange); sight (the man’s monocle she holds); smell (the nosegay of violets, given perhaps by the owner of the monocle); touch (the smooth satin peignoir, or perhaps the objects she holds in her hands); and hearing (Victorine’s ear cocked to listen to the parrot’s squawk). Yet Zola denied any rivalry between Courbet and Manet. In an article of May 1866, he wrote, “M. Manet’s place is marked out in the Louvre as is that of Courbet and every other artist of a strong and unyielding temperament. Besides, Courbet and Manet have not the least resemblance to

6.59

Constantin Guys
(1802–1892)

*Young Woman Lifting
Her Skirt and Walking
to the Left*

Watercolor, 8⅞ x 8⅞ in.
(21.4 x 21.3 cm)

Musée du Louvre



each other and if these artists are logical, they should deny each other. It is precisely because they have nothing in common that each can go his own way.”¹¹⁵ And it is precisely because they had much in common that Zola felt he had to deny the obvious.

Manet’s pavilion was a *succès d’estime*, if not a popular success. Again on the defensive, Zola wrote in 1868, “Last year, when the artist held a private exhibition, I read praise of a large number of his works in several journals. The inevitable, necessary reaction which I predicted in 1866 is quietly happening; the public is becoming accustomed to his work, the critics are calming down and are willing to open their eyes; success is on the way.”¹¹⁶ More than any other measure, success could be counted in the emulation visible in the work of Manet’s young colleagues—Bazille, Renoir, and especially the ambitious young Monet. For them, Manet had replaced Courbet as the primary role model. Indeed, for the 1867 Salon, Monet prepared an immense homage to Manet, *Women in the Garden* (FIG. 6.60). Happy with the unexpected success of his *Camille* at the Salon of 1866, he began work that summer on an outdoor scene that might compensate for his failure earlier in the year to complete a twenty-foot (6-meter) *Déjeuner sur l’herbe* in time for the Salon (fragments survive at the Musée d’Orsay). This time he sought to capture the effect of outdoor light by painting the full-size canvas outdoors. As he explained, “This work I actually painted on the spot and after nature, which had not been done before. I had dug a hole in the ground, a sort of ditch, to lower my canvas gradually when I came to paint the top. I was working at Ville d’Avray, where from time to time I had the advice of Courbet.”¹¹⁷ It was an audacious effort; Monet made no attempt to mitigate the strong contrasts of light, and he did not hide the spontaneous method of his technique. But the real novelty lay in his effort to elevate minor genre painting to the level previously reserved for grand history painting. His picture was the antithesis of the work currently produced by Gérôme or Meissonier. It was thus considered dangerous, and rejected at the Salon: “After being so favorable at first, the jury turned against me, and I was ignominiously blackballed when I presented this new painting at the Salon.”¹¹⁸ Zola

eulogized the work the following year: “Last year, a figurative painting [by Monet] was rejected, representing women in light summer dresses picking flowers in the allées of a garden; the sun was aiming directly at the strikingly white skirts; the warm shadow of a tree, cutting through the allées, falling on the sunlit dresses, like a big gray napkin. Nothing could be stranger in effect. One must have a very particular love of one’s own time to dare such a tour de force, fabrics divided in two by shade and sun, well-dressed women in a bed of flowers carefully groomed by a gardener’s rake.”¹¹⁹

As Zola predicted, Manet’s paintings began to attract a larger audience, but the work of his acolyte Monet continued to be blackballed. After the 1867 debacle Nieuwerkerke bowed to pressure and liberalized the rules for jury selection for 1868 and 1869, but he kept an eye out for Monet and personally refused his works over the next three years.¹²⁰ In 1868 Bazille, Degas, Berthe Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley were accepted, thanks to the intervention of Charles Daubigny, a juror, and their works were hung together, proof of the growing recognition that these artists constituted a new school of painting (see FIG. 6.83). According to Castagnary, “M. de Nieuwerkerke has it in for Daubigny. If this year’s Salon is what it is, a Salon of newcomers; if its doors have opened to almost all who wanted to exhibit; if it exhibits 1,378 more works than last year’s Salon; if amid this overflow of ‘free’ painting, ‘official’ painting makes a poor showing, it is Daubigny’s fault. Daubigny wanted to make himself popular, he is ambitious, a liberal and a freethinker.”¹²¹ Daubigny would remain a staunch defender of Realist painting and young artists, who, though they were now more warmly greeted, continued to press for Salon reform. The Salon of 1869, would be the last for Nieuwerkerke. Weary of Nieuwerkerke’s public infidelities, princess Mathilde succumbed to the attentions of a new suitor, an artist named Claudius Popelin. She dropped Nieuwerkerke late in 1869 and within weeks he was stripped of almost all his posts; by the time the Salon opened in spring 1870, there was a new minister of fine arts in place. Nieuwerkerke resigned his remaining post in September, only to flee to exile in London as the government of Napoleon III fell.

6.60 (opposite)
Claude Monet
(1840–1926)
Women in a Garden,
1867
Oil on canvas,
100⅜ x 80¾ in.
(255 x 205 cm)
Musée d’Orsay

JAPONISME

Of all the displays at the fair, the Japanese exhibit would have the farthest-reaching consequences in the visual arts. (Samuel F. B. Morse's telegraph was perhaps the most influential industrial product.) Indeed, the Goncourts began to see the entire fair through a Japanese lens: "Little, by little, things around us took on a fantastic appearance. The sky above the Champ de Mars put on the tint of an oriental sky; the confusion of the constructions in the garden outlined against the violet sky the fretwork of a landscape by Marilhat; the domes, the kiosks, the colored minarets put into the Parisian night the reflected transparencies of a night in an Asian city. . . . And at times it seemed to us that we walked in an image painted in Japan, around this infinite place, under the roof, under the roof which projected like that of a bonzery, lit by frosted glass globes, like the paper lanterns of a Feast of Lanterns."¹²² This imagery was unthinkable just ten years before before. Japan only began official trading with the West in 1854, when commodore Matthew C. Perry of America signed the Treaty of Kanagawa. A limited number of Japanese objects had previously been bought by the Dutch traders who had long held rights to dock at a small island in the bay of Nagasaki, and a

few works of contemporary Japanese art and crafts had been exhibited in the Dutch display at the 1855 Exposition Universelle. But by 1860 Japan had opened its principal ports to the United States, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Russia, and France, and material began to pour into Europe. Monet remembered that when he was sixteen he found Japanese color woodblock prints at Le Havre, in a shop where "in the past, they used to sell curious objects brought back by clippers."¹²³ The Goncourts recorded the purchase of their first Japanese color woodblock prints on June 8, 1861; Baudelaire showed Zacharie Astruc a "superb collection of Japanese color prints, of unheard artistry," in May 1863.¹²⁴ Very quickly an appreciation of Japanese art became the mark of a heightened aesthetic sensibility.

By 1864 young artists in Paris and London had begun to incorporate elements of the new art in their own pictures. Whistler, one of the first, dressed models in kimonos and arranged them like the courtesans in Utamaro's woodblock prints. Although Chinese and Japanese elements are rather indiscriminately commingled, *La Princesse du pays de la porcelaine* (FIG. 6.91) adopts the pose of a geisha in Edo's demimonde—the ukiyo or "floating world." Champfleury called such

6.61

Felix Bracquemond
(1833–1914) and
L.M. & Cie.

Service Rousseau, 1867

Faïence dish, diameter:
9 7/8 in. (24 cm), faïence
fruit dish, height: 6 in.
(15 cm)

Private collection





6.62

James McNeill Whistler
(1834–1903)

*La Princesse du pays de
la porcelaine*, 1863–1864

Oil on canvas,
80 x 46 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(200 x 116 cm)
Freer Gallery of Art,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C.;
gift of Charles Lang Freer



6.63

Edouard Manet
(1832-1883)

Portrait of Emile Zola,
1868

Oil on canvas,
57 1/4 x 44 7/8 in.
(146.5 x 114 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

works “Franco-American paintings so bizarre that they confused the eyes of people naïve enough to want to serve on the jury of paintings exhibitions. Since the color harmonies were distinctive and new, doors were shut in front of their noses.”¹²⁵ For the rest of his life, James Whistler would pride himself on his knowledge of Japanese decorative art, and furnish his surroundings with fine porcelain and screens. Whistler even signed his works in the Japanese style, first with a cartouche and later with his butterfly symbol. Manet took a more innovative tack. Over the summer of 1864 he painted several seascapes at the port of Boulogne in which he adopted some key characteristics of Japanese graphic art: calligraphic brush strokes, minimal modeling, suppressed shadows, dramatic foreshortening, bird’s-eye perspective, and broad planes of unmodulated color. The following summer, at Trouville, Whistler and Courbet made evanescent seascapes that pursued the same effects.

Japanese prints, porcelains, and screens began to appear in the houses of cognoscenti in the 1860s, but

no one was prepared for the extensive display at the 1867 Exposition Universelle. It was the first in which Japan had participated, and although the Japanese government was in transition, it managed to send several thousand objects. The shogunate commissioned one hundred new pictures from Kunisada and Kuniyoshi—fifty landscapes and fifty figure studies; dozens of new albums and books; and hundreds of umbrellas, fans, screens, bronzes, enamels, lacquers, and other furnishings. An entire Japanese farm was recreated in the fairgrounds, and in the Hall of Machines, a French architect was commissioned to recreate the house of a daimyo, a noble. The effect on the artistic community was immediate. The South Kensington Museum in London—the future Victoria and Albert Museum—bought 150 Japanese objects at the fair, and the decorative arts museum in Vienna made acquisitions there as well. “In 1867,” wrote the critic Ernest Chesneau, “the exposition made Japan à la mode.”¹²⁶

Young artists embraced Japonisme as an emblem of modernity. During the summer of 1867 Monet



6.64
Edouard Manet
(1832–1883)
*Portrait of Nina de
Callias*, 1873–74
Oil on canvas,
44½ x 65⅞ in.
(113 x 166 cm)
Musée d’Orsay

6.65

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
(1841-1919)

*Mme Georges
Charpentier [Maguerite
Lemonnier (d. 1904)]
and Her Children.*

*Georgette (b. 1872) and
Paul (1875-1895), 1878*

Oil on canvas.

60 1/2 x 74 7/8 in.

(153.7 x 190.2 cm)

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York; Wolfe Fund,
1907; Catharine Wolfe
Collection





painted one of his most important works—a demonstration piece—in the Japanese style, *The Terrace at Sainte Adresse* (Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) “the Chinese painting in which there are flags,”¹²⁷ Chinese and Japanese being interchangeable terms at this time.¹²⁸ Today it is more difficult to see the Japanese characteristics, but in the 1860s, the flat bands of color as well as the strong diagonal slant of the shadows would have reminded sophisticated viewers of Japanese woodblock prints. Monet seems to have drawn inspiration from a specific print by Hokusai that he owned and which still hangs in his house at Giverny. “At the time,” Monet said “the composition was considered very daring.”¹²⁹

When commissioned in 1866 to provide drawings for an extensive ceramic dinner service, the etcher Félix Bracquemond turned to Hokusai’s fourteen-volume set of figure and animal studies, called the *Manga*, as well as to individual prints by Hiroshige, Hojusaï, and Hokusen. Bracquemond, a friend of Manet and the artists in his circle—especially Fantin-Latour and Degas—is said to have been the first to discover the *Manga*, in 1862. With Japanese motifs strewn wittily across eighteenth-century faience plate forms, the “Service Rousseau” (FIG. 6.61) was the first example of Japonisme in French ceramics. Like Hokusai’s *Manga*, it was displayed at the Exposition Universelle, where it won a prize.¹³⁰ It proved to be such a popular set of dishes that the Goncourts were moved to dismiss it: “Bracquemond designed a service, a service that has provoked a revolution, but in the end it is only some decals taken from Japanese books, thrown on some porcelain from Creil.”¹³¹

Japanese objects became almost obligatory in the homes of forward-thinking people. Manet was careful to include a Kuniyoshi print adjacent to an etching after *Olympia* in his otherwise sober portrait of Emile Zola (FIG. 6.63). Inexpensive Japanese paper fans are pinned to the wall behind the bohemienne Nina de Callias in the glamorous portrait by Manet (FIG. 6.64) and Japanese lanterns hang in her music room. While she was much more conventional than de Callias, Mme Georges Charpentier, wife of a distinguished publisher, nevertheless commissioned Renoir to paint a portrait of herself, her son, daughter, and their dog, Porto, in their Japanese sitting room, this time expensively decorated with a fine screen and Western furniture in the Japanese taste



6.66

Claude Monet (1840–1926)

Camille in a Japanese Robe,
1876

Oil on canvas, 92¹/₆ x 57 in.
(231.6 x 142.3 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston;
1951 Purchase Fund

(FIG. 6.65). Not to be outdone (though lacking a commission), Monet painted his wife Camille in an elaborate and hideous kimono standing before a wall of Japanese fans (FIG. 6.66). The result, evidence of a rare lapse of taste, was nonetheless accepted at the Salon of 1876. Japonisme grew so prevalent in the 1870s that by the next world's fair in 1878, ambitious French makers exhibited elaborate confections of Franco-Japanese furnishings (FIG. 6.67). As the century progressed, Japonisme replaced historicism as the dominant style in decorative arts, and it remained influential through the creation of the Art Nouveau aesthetic.

In painting, the impact of Japanese art was both profound and extraordinarily widespread. In 1867 Champfleury joked that "today we are menaced by a Japanese invasion in painting." Théodore Duret, critic and friend of Manet, Monet, and Whistler, considered that Japonisme was the transforming factor in the development of the new style in painting: "The arrival among us of Japanese albums and images completed the transformation by initiating us to an absolutely new systems of coloring. Without the methods revealed by the Japanese, a whole array of means would have remained unknown to us."¹³² In the late 1870s Ernest Chesneau could detect the influence of Japanese art in the work of many modern French painters: "M. Alfred STEVENS, certain rare delicacies of tone; M. James TISSOT, strengths and even strangenesses in composition, as in his beautiful *Promenades on the Thames*; M. Whistler, his exquisite finesses of color; M. Manet, his frankness of touch and the wit of his curious forms, as in his etchings for *Le Corbeau* of Edgar Poe; M. Monet, the summary suppression of detail for the benefit of the impression of the ensemble; . . . M. Degas, the imaginative realism of his groups, the sharp effect of the distribution of highlights in his stunning café-concert scenes."¹³³

The next generation of advanced painters was equally awed by Japanese art. When Gauguin looked at Breton women, he thought he saw Asian faces. When van Gogh moved to Arles, he hoped to find the light of Japan in the Midi. And when, in 1893, Monet, Pissarro, and Rodin visited an exhibition of Japanese art in Paris, they thought they saw Impressionism.

"Good God, this decides in our favor. There are some gray sunsets that are extraordinarily impressionist." The following day Pissarro wrote, "Hiroshige is a wonderful Impressionist. Myself, Monet, and Rodin are in raptures over him. I am glad to have made my effects of snow and of flood scenes; the Japanese artists give me confirmation of our visual choice."¹³⁴

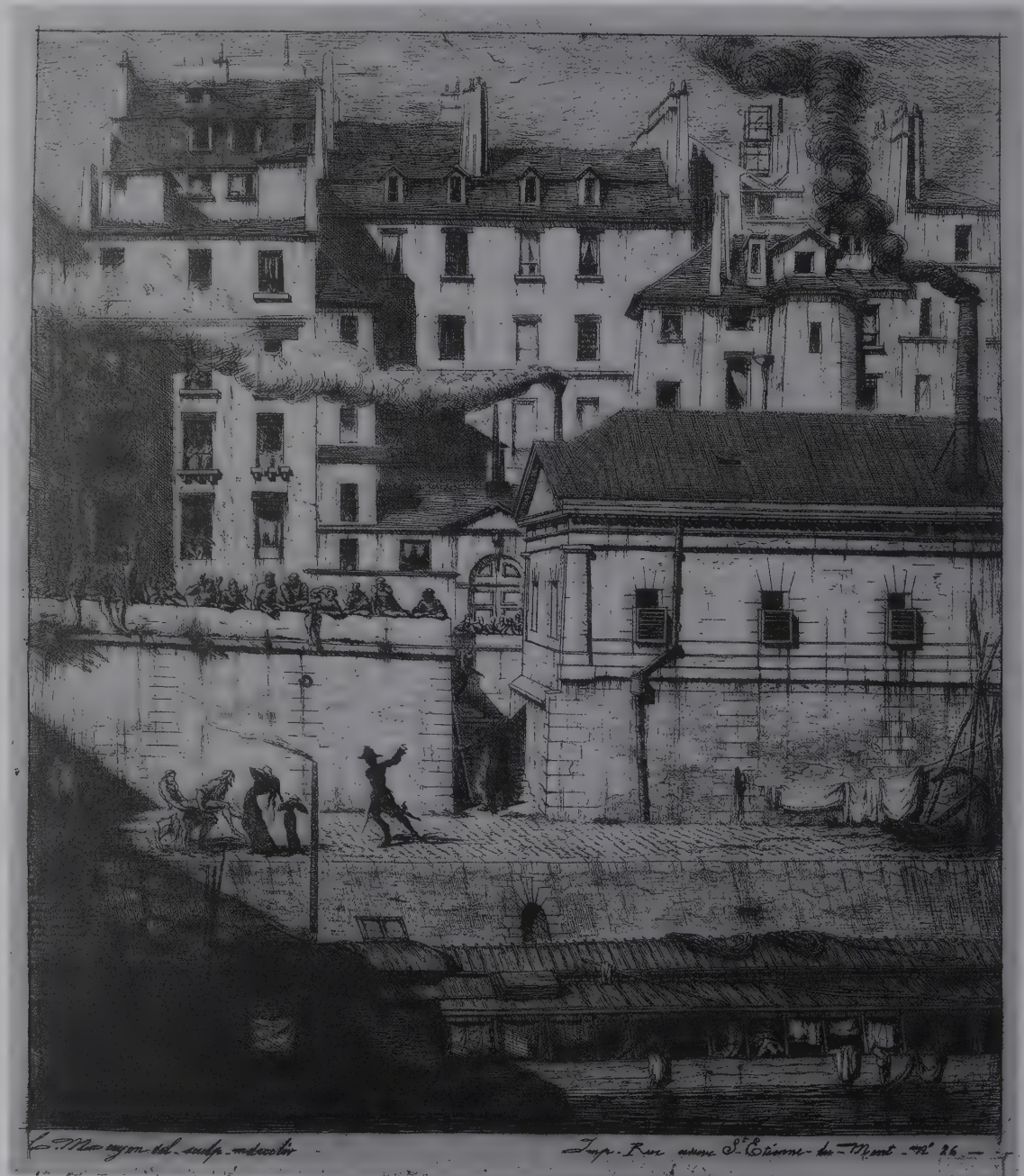


6.67
Edouard Lievre
(1829–1886) and
Edouard Detaille
(1848–1912)
Cupboard on supporting
table, c. 1877
Rosewood, chased and
gilded bronze, engraved
iron, oil on wood, glass,
82 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 43 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 22 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(210 x 110 x 57 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

N A P O L E O N I I I , H A U S S M A N N , A N D T H E T R A N S F O R M A T I O N O F P A R I S

In 1867 the Goncourts gleefully recorded that the eleven-year-old prince-imperial disapproved of the changes to Paris being wrought by Baron Georges-Eugène Haussmann.¹³⁵ “It appears that he is a little preservationist. He has a personal hatred of Haussmann for having destroyed everything and for making mud everywhere. He did not want to leave his apartment at the Tuileries, saying that he would become sick if any-

thing changed. His father calls him ‘the little killjoy.’”¹³⁶ The little prince articulated two of the most frequent objections to the modernization of Paris, to which others would add the enrichment of speculators at the expense of the the working class and the poor who were expelled from the center of the city, the creation of arsenals to the detriment of popular neighborhoods behind the Hôtel de Ville and on the rue Mouffetard, and the



6.68

Charles Meryon
(1821–1868)

The Morgue, 1854

Etching with drypoint
(fourth state of seven),
9 1/16 x 8 1/8 in.

(23 x 20.7 cm)

Private collection



establishment of monotonous boulevards shamelessly torn through the urban fabric of medieval and baroque architecture. In less than twenty years, Napoleon III and Haussmann initiated the most extensive modification of the city in its entire history, establishing a new urban ideal that was copied throughout the Western world. But their plans were always controversial, as was the cost: 2.5 billion francs, of which 1.5 billion was spent on new streets. It was their creative financing, including the issuance of public debt, that brought the greatest scorn. In 1868 the Republican politician Jules Ferry published a pamphlet, *Les Comptes fantastiques d'Haussmann*, that helped put the prefect out of office and contributed to the fall of the Second Republic.¹³⁷ “Embellish Paris, who would [want to] prevent you? But you are not embellishing, you are spoiling. You do not embellish, you demolish, you incur debt; you smash the present, you compromise the future, and one of the enigmas of our times will be that your fantasies could have endured for such a long time.”¹³⁸

As the Goncourts saw it, the transformation of Paris was not simply physical.

Our Paris, the Paris where we were born, the Paris of the way of life of 1830 to 1848, is passing away. Its passing is not material but moral. Social life is going through a great evolution, which is

beginning. I see women, children, households, families in this café. The interior is passing away. Life turns back to become public. The club for those on high, the café for those below, that is what society and the people are come to. All of this makes me feel, in this country so dear to my heart, like a traveler. I am a stranger to what is coming, to what is, as I am to these new boulevards, which no longer smack of the world of Balzac, which smack of London, some Babylon of the future. It is idiotic to arrive in an age under construction: the soul has discomforts as a result, like a man who lives in a newly-built house.¹³⁹

Like many monarchs before him, Napoleon III dreamed of transforming Paris. Imprisoned at the Fortress of Ham after the failed coup d'état of 1840, he wrote, “I want to be a second Augustus, because Augustus . . . made Rome a city of marble.”¹⁴⁰ He wanted to impress his mark on the city, and make the city reflect his imperial ambitions. He dreamed of a modern capital, with modern conveniences such as ample and clean water, sanitary sewers, and broad, well-paved, well-lit avenues that led to distinguished public monuments—many being improvements that he had observed in London. Louis-Napoleon fancied himself an amateur architect. In Paris in 1848 he was often seen in the Bois de Boulogne sketching modifications on

6.69

Charles Meryon
(1821–1868)

Pont au Change, 1854

Etching (tenth state),
5½ x 12⅞ in.
(14 x 32 cm)

S. P. Avery Collection,
The New York Public
Library



6.70

Honoré Daumier
(1808–1879)

Third-Class Carriage,
1863–65

Oil on canvas.

25.1 x 35.1 in.

(65.4 x 90.2 cm)

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York;

H. O. Havemeyer
Collection, bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer,
1929

a map of Paris; after he was elected prince-president, he obtained from the Bibliothèque Nationale a copy of Jacques-Ignace Hittorff's *L'Architecture polychrome chez les grecs*.¹⁴¹ When, on June 29, 1853, he appointed Haussmann, who had ably served as a public administrator in Bordeaux, prefect of the Seine (the equivalent of mayor of Paris and governor of the capital region), he handed him a map of Paris. The emperor had drawn new streets in four colors, representing the relative urgency of each network.¹⁴² "It was the emperor who marked out all this," the obsequious Haussmann recalled in his memoirs. "I have been only his collaborator."¹⁴³ Indeed, Napoleon had already undertaken legislative initiatives to enable the condemnation of private property that would have to precede building the new streets.

The problems that Napoleon hoped to rectify were many. Overcrowding and the absence of sewers had led to the accumulation of filth and the spread of

disease. In poor neighborhoods housing was so dense that light barely penetrated the beehives of infilled courtyards and narrow streets. (So little had changed in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine that Dickens based his description of revolutionary Paris in *The Tale of Two Cities* on his own experience of Paris.) The city was prone to epidemic. Cholera killed 18,400 Parisians in 1831 and 19,000 in 1848–49. Two-thirds of the streets had waste flowing in the gutters; these gutters led to large conduits that emptied into the Seine, which remained a primary source of water for the city. Only one in five houses had a supply of fresh water, the rest coming from the Canal de l'Ourcq, and only 150 buildings in the entire city had water running to the upper floors. In contrast, by the fall of the Empire in 1870, reservoirs provided enough pressure to bring water to all but the highest points of the city. Modern sewers, evocatively photographed by Nadar (FIG. 6.71), were laid under every new street.

Over the centuries, as the city expanded from one set of bulwarks to the next, enormous transportation barriers remained in place. The quays of the Seine were the only wide routes through the center of Paris, yet they were often rendered impassable by the traffic of loading and discharging barges. On the right bank, the Louvre, the Tuileries, and the dense agglomeration of buildings between the palaces and the Palais Royal were obstacles to traffic from east to west and north to south; on the left bank, the Luxembourg Palace and gardens made a similar obstacle, and there were no wide streets leading from the quais through the Latin Quarter to the Panthéon, for example, or indeed from the east end of Saint-Germain to the quays. Communication between sectors of the city was poor at best: Balzac's Rogrons and Zola's Macquarts rarely moved beyond

their immediate neighborhoods throughout their entire lives; horse-drawn omnibuses, though frequent—and with charming names like Doves, Gazelles, and Reunited Women—were considered expensive for the working class and too unfashionable for the upper classes.

The emperor's priority was to create a giant cross-roads at the heart of the city. Naturally, he first intended to complete the rue de Rivoli, begun by Napoléon I along the north edge of the Tuileries gardens. Laid out by Percier and Fontaine, who also designed the Italianate façades and round-arched arcades of the buildings that faced the street, the avenue began at the Naval Ministry on the place de la Concorde and came to an abrupt halt just after it reached the Tuileries Palace. Napoleon III proposed to extend it past the projected buildings that

6.71

Nadar (Gaspard-Félix
Tournachon)
(1825–1910)

The Sewers of Paris,
1861–62

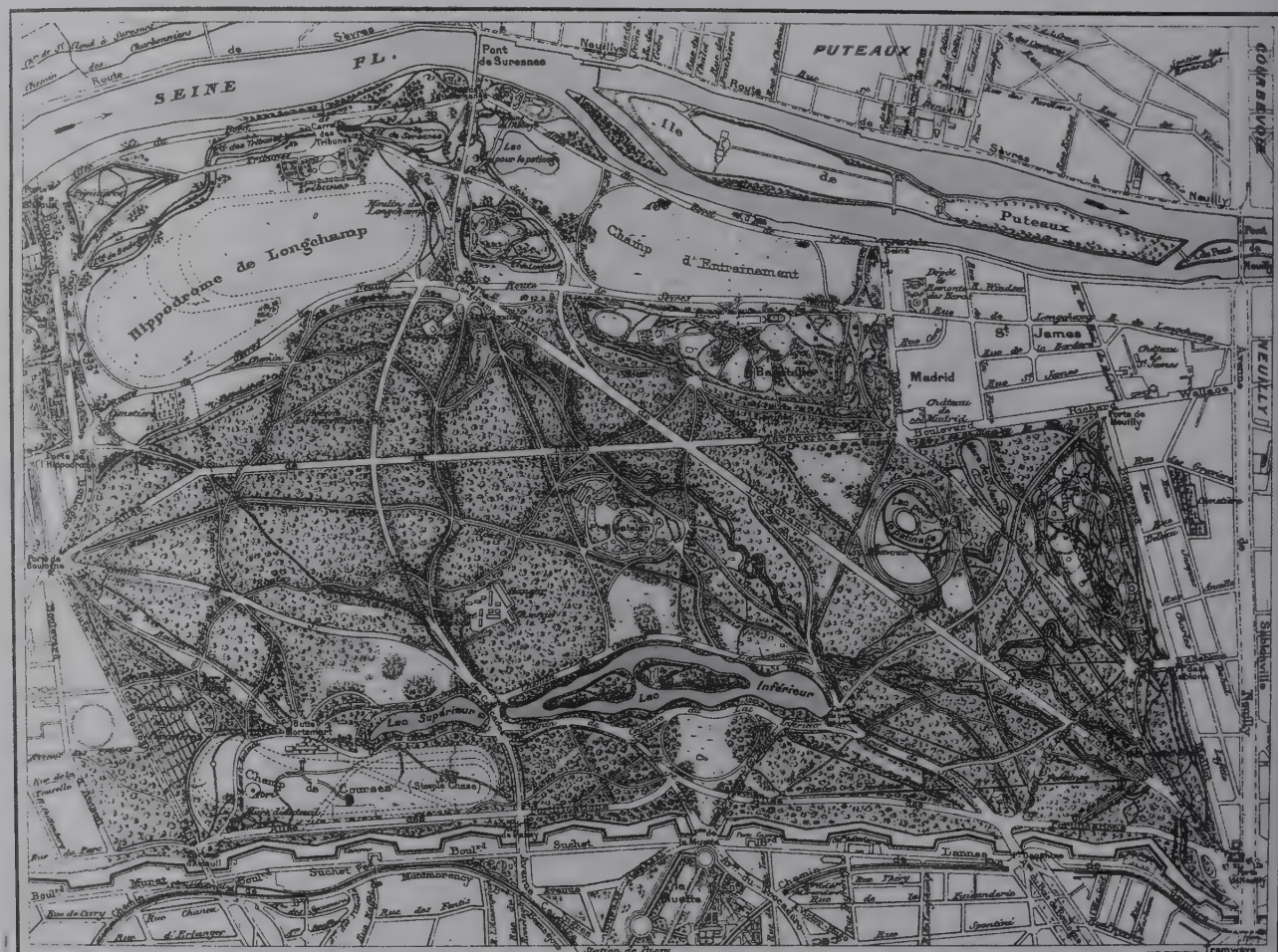
Albumen silver print
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France



would unite the Tuileries and the Louvre, beyond the Hôtel de Ville and the place du Châtelet, all the way to the place de la Bastille and the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. By extending the rue Faubourg Saint-Antoine, in eastern Paris, and by completing, in western Paris, the Champs-Élysées and the new avenue de l'Impératrice (avenue Foch), leading from the Arc de Triomphe to the Bois de Boulogne, he could fulfill the old ambition to connect the two great green parks through an almost direct east-west thoroughfare. Indeed, one of the least controversial projects was the rebuilding of these two parks by Haussmann's colleague Jean Alphand in the picturesque English style (FIG. 6.72). (Characteristically, the Bois de Vincennes, in east Paris, was designated for the enjoyment of the working class; the Bois de Boulogne, in fashionable west Paris, was designed as the playground of the rich (FIG. 6.73). The emperor also intended to create a comparable north-south axis,

the boulevard du Centre (today the boulevards de Strasbourg, de Sébastopol, du Palais, and Saint-Michel), that would lead from the new train stations that served England and Germany, the Gare du Nord and the Gare de l'Est, to the grand crossing where it would meet the rue de Rivoli at the newly enlarged place du Châtelet, travel across the Pont au Change, pass through the middle of the Ile de la Cité, where it would be flanked by new public buildings (the Palais de la Justice, the Tribunal de Commerce, the Préfecture de Police, and the Hôtel-Dieu) and continue across the Pont Saint-Michel to the newly arranged place Saint-Michel, from which it would continue south to cross the new boulevard Saint-Germain on its way to the place de l'Observatoire at the southernmost end of the Luxembourg Gardens

In addition to the great crossroads, the emperor also envisioned avenues that would lead from the quays to



6.72

Map of the Bois de
Boulogne, after 1870



6.73

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
(1841-1919)

*Riders in the Bois de
Boulogne, 1872-73*

Oil on canvas,
102¾ x 89 in.

(261 x 226 cm)

Kunsthalle, Hamburg,
Germany

6.75 (far right)

Charles Marville (1816–1879)

Boulevard Haussmann.

Street Lamp, c. 1874

Original photographic print,

9⁷/₁₆ x 14 in. (24 x 35.5 cm)

Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris

6.74 (below)

Charles Marville (1816–1879)

Boulevard Saint Michel.

Moving a Tree, 1877

Photograph, 10³/₁₆ x 13⁷/₁₆ in.

(26 x 34.5 cm)

Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris

the already fashionable Grands Boulevards, and from the Grands Boulevards toward the outskirts of the city.

These include the avenue Napoléon (ordained by the emperor but built after 1870, now the avenue de l'Opéra); the boulevard Malesherbes, which served the posh new residential quarter on the Plaine Monceau; and the boulevard Haussmann and the avenue Friedland, which connected the Opéra with l'Étoile at the Arc de Triomphe, an area of extensive development during the Second Empire. The Arc de Triomphe, begun by Napoleon I but completed by Louis-Philippe, was originally set on an island in a circular *place*. Under Napoleon III, the circle was articulated as the nexus of a web of radiating streets, with, at the intersections with the circle, rich but uniformly treated mansions. The emperor also conceived additional “*étoiles*”: one at the place du Trône (now the place de la Nation); another between the Arc du Triomphe and the Bois de Boulogne



(now the place Victor Hugo); another on the Butte Chaillot, across from the Champ de Mars (now the place du Trocadéro). Haussmann and his city planners would extend this notion, so that half-*étoiles* would be created wherever difficult adjacencies made for awkward public spaces—at the sides of the new Opéra, for example, or in front of the new Gare du Nord. (The *étoile*, quintessentially French, was nothing new; having been borrowed from seventeenth-century garden design, it had been used in L'Enfant's plan for Washington, D.C., as well as in the development of several new neighborhoods in Paris under the Restoration, such as Passy in 1824.) A distinctive feature of Haussmann's aesthetic, rather than that of the emperor, was the prefect's insistence on the appearance of symmetry, even at the cost of absurdly proportioned leftover lots, and the use of domes and columns as markers of his new sight lines. Perhaps the most famous example of the latter is Haussmann's insistence that a dome be placed asymmetrically on the Tribunal de Commerce in order to serve as the marker of the axis of the boulevard du Sébastopol as one descended from north to south. “I have never fixed the lines of any street,” Haussmann wrote, “without keeping in mind the terminal feature (*point de vue*) one might give it, especially in the case of one of the principal arteries of Paris.”¹⁴⁴ Frustrated that the lines of the street had been established before his tenure, Haussmann lamented that the street had not been centered on the distant dome of the Sorbonne,

hence the mandated dome on the Tribunal de Commerce. The same obsession must be the cause of the absurdly proportioned church of Saint-Augustin, commissioned by Haussmann from Victor Baltard, its enormous dome crushing the small church beneath it so that it could be seen from the place de la Madeleine as one started up the boulevard Malesherbes toward the Monceau district.

The work on the Left Bank was not as well conceived as that on the Right Bank. The emperor was never fully convinced of Haussmann's plan for the boulevard Saint-Germain, and they openly disagreed on whether the Pont de Sully should be perpendicular to the Seine or cross it diagonally. (The rue de Rennes was intended to parallel rue Bonaparte and connect place Saint-Germain with the quay, but it was never built.) The failure to treat the Left Bank adequately has long been seen as a plot to isolate it from the rest of Paris; it is assumed that

the emperor and his prefect built streets to facilitate the movement of troops, to inhibit the erection of barricades, and to isolate seditious neighborhoods, such as the Latin Quarter or the Faubourg Saint-Antoine. But this may in fact reflect Haussmann's ideology more than the emperor's. In his *Mémoires*, written decades after the fact, Haussmann wrote that "large boulevards will permit the circulation not only of air and light but of troops," that disencumbered palaces "afford easier access on days of celebration, and a simplified defense on days of riot," and he stated his belief that people would be less prone to revolt if their conditions were improved and their city made beautiful. Yet the barricades of 1871 were built in many of the same locations as those of 1848. And although Haussmann did not hide his contempt for socialists, anarchists, or even the poor, and while he was eager to eject all of them from his city, the same cannot be said of the emperor, whose very exis-

6.76

Gustave Caillebotte
(1848–1894)

Paris Street: Rainy Day,
1876/77

Oil on canvas,
84¹/₆ x 110¹/₂ in.
(212.2 x 276.2 cm)
The Art Institute of
Chicago; Charles H. and
Mary F. S. Worcester
Collection





6.77 (above)
Victor Baltard
(1805–1874)
Halles Centrales
Structural section
of a typical pavilion,
1853–54
Ink wash on paper,
Archives Nationales



6.78 (above, right)
Charles Marville
(1816–1879)
Les Nouvelles Halles Centrales
Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris

tence depended on the direct vote of working-class men and rural peasants.

Hausmann's most distinctive legacy was the establishment of homogenous streetscapes. During his tenure, absolute uniformity became the rule, and interestingly enough, enforcement became even stricter under the Third Republic after Hausmann's fall. The interest of the state and civic planning, working in the name of the people, triumphed over the caprice of real estate developers. Apart from civic monuments, which were treated as independent, four-sided palaces, individual buildings largely disappeared within street walls defined by the Hausmannian *immeuble*, typically a six-story apartment complex with commercial space and mezzanine at street level. These blocks turned the corner, so that buildings along a street were no longer perceived as a sequence of thin facades but rather as monumental building blocks. The seventeenth-century standard of narrow three-story plaster-faced buildings, pressed higgledy-piggledy against one another, with walls markedly thicker at the base (still visible in the Marais), and the eighteenth-century standard of one-and-a-half story facades guarding two- to four-story houses set behind a court (still visible on the rue

Faubourg Saint-Honoré near the Elysées Palace or on the rue de Grenelle near the rue du Bac) became the wide, tree-lined avenue walled by pilastered stone edifices with prominent mansard roofs and matching iron balconies (the avenue de l'Opéra or the boulevard Saint-Michel).

Hausmann's *immeubles* did not spring fully formed from his brow. The seeds were laid by his predecessors, as the previous chapter explains. The first steps toward Hausmannization were actually taken by Louis-Philippe's prefect of the Seine, the comte de Rambuteau. Not only did he line the Grands Boulevards with trees and furnish the streets with gas lighting (FIGS. 6.74 and 6.75), public fountains, and urinals, but it was also he who saw that the law of May 3, 1841, allowing the expropriation of private property for public use, could be used to transform the city. Armed with the law of 1841, Rambuteau began work on the boulevard de Strasbourg, to connect the Gare de l'Est with the center of the city. But as Loyer has noted, the shift in scale was dramatic. The rue Rambuteau was forty-three feet (13 meters) wide; the boulevard de Strasbourg ninety-eight feet (30 meters) wide.¹⁴⁵ This constituted a huge departure from the late-eighteenth-century standards,

when short streets were set at twenty feet (6 meters), intermediate ones at thirty-three (10 meters), “inner arteries” at forty feet (12 meters), and major thoroughways at forty-six (14 meters). To create a ninety-eight-foot-wide avenue through the center of Paris, major demolition would be required, at great cost. The clearing of the area for the rebuilding of Les Halles, Rambuteau’s next project, required seven years of negotiations between city and state, from 1842 to 1849; bonds were not issued until 1851, after Louis-Philippe had been deposed and Rambuteau dismissed. To solve this intractable problem, Napoleon III issued a decree on March 26, 1852, that

gave the state eminent domain in all instances of public utility. With that decree in hand, the emperor and his new prefect, Haussmann, could undertake projects that were literally inconceivable in prior times.

New streets were of course essential for the creation of Haussmann’s *immeuble*. Under Louis-Philippe, a distinctive new architectural type had evolved as the traditional plaster-faced masonry buildings of the Marais or the massive stone palazzi of the rue de Rivoli were replaced by thin-walled apartment buildings faced with decorated plaster or stone veneer, punched with large windows hung with external louvered shutters. These

6.79

Gustave Caillebotte
(1848–1894)

*Fruit Displayed on
a Stand, c. 1880*

Oil on canvas,
30 1/8 x 39 1/8 in.
(76.5 x 100.5 cm)
Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston; Fanny P. Mason
Fund in memory of
Alice Thevin







6.80 (opposite)

Henri Labrouste (1801-1875)

Reading room, Bibliothèque
Nationale de France, 1866

6.81 (left)

Jacques-Ignace Hittorff
(1792-1867)

Gare du Nord from the
southwest, 1861/65

Pencil on paper, 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(34.9 x 47.1 cm)

Wallraf-Richartz-Museum,
Cologne, Germany



6.82

Jacques-Ignace Hittorff
(1792-1867)

Gare du Nord, 1865





6.83

Henri Fantin-Latour (1836–1904)

A Studio in the Batignolles, 1870

Oil on canvas, 80 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 107 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.

(204 x 273.5 cm)

Musée d'Orsay



6.84

Edouard Manet
(1832-1883)

The Balcony, 1868-69

Oil on canvas,
68 x 49½ in.
(170 x 124 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

buildings, as Loyer has observed, created an almost weightless, transparent presence in the new neighborhoods—Batignolles, for example or La Nouvelle Athènes. Although mass and scale were determined by the law of 1784, playful individuality was visible nonetheless as one building rubbed shoulders with the next. Under Haussmann, especially after 1859, the typical building grew to a size previously reserved for civic monuments, and the façades fell under the strict control of the prefecture. Thanks to new industrial techniques, stone could be cut much more cheaply than before, and all new apartment buildings on new streets in the center of the city were faced in limestone, with elaborately carved brackets and cornices and rich window and door surrounds. (Shades of Rome under Augustus.) Indeed, these decorative moldings were the only features that distinguished one building from the next. But on important streets and squares, even

the decoration of the façades was prescribed: hence the harmonious uniformity of the monumental Corinthian order on the facades of the buildings of the place de l'Opéra or the place Saint-Michel. Caillebotte's *Paris Street: Rainy Day* (see FIG. 6.76) shows the full effect of Haussmann's aesthetic, almost randomly observed at an intersection near the place de l'Europe. The monumental becomes nearly banal through repetition, but the overall unity remains impressive.

The alignment of streets and the creation of uniform streetscapes had begun in the late eighteenth century and picked up pace under Louis-Philippe. So too, Haussmann's greatest achievement, the market of Les Halles, was already underway when he arrived on the scene. Gustave Caillebotte's *Display of Fruit* (FIG. 6.79) gives us a glimpse of what a shopper would have encountered. A market had been present in the area between the church of Saint Eustache and the rue Saint-Honoré since



6.85

Claude Monet
(1840–1926)

*Carnival on the Boulevard
des Capucines*, 1873

Oil on canvas, 24 x 31½ in.
(61 x 80 cm)

Pushkin Museum of Fine
Arts, Moscow

the middle ages. In 1748 it was decreed that the quarter would be rebuilt, and the remarkable round Halle au Blé was built in 1763. Under Louis-Philippe, the comte de Rambuteau decided to build permanent market buildings and to that end commissioned a study in 1842 and, in 1843, plans from Victor Baltard, perhaps the most prominent architect in the city administration of public buildings.¹⁴⁶ As noted above, Rambuteau's plans were ensnared by bureaucracy, and funds were not made available until 1851. Baltard built the first of a proposed group of masonry pavilions with iron roofs, but the blockhouselike meat market, nicknamed the Fort, proved difficult to ventilate, and the emperor stopped work after his inspection. (Photographs show that the exterior elevations were loosely based on the idea of a Roman bath.) Immediately after his appointment Haussmann took over the project. According to his memoirs, the emperor told him, "I need vast umbrellas, nothing more! . . . sketching with a few pencil lines the forms he had in mind."¹⁴⁷ Haussmann claims to have developed drawings of his own that he then showed to Baltard, who was reluctant to abandon masonry forms. "Iron, iron, nothing but iron," Haussmann urged.¹⁴⁸ The result was a village of graceful and airy cast-iron sheds (cleverly strengthened with steel tie beams), with stepped clerestories and thin partition walls, infilled with masonry at the base, louvers and glass panes at the top (FIG. 6.77). The pavilions, each devoted to a particular kind of produce, were connected to each other by glass-covered streets (FIG. 6.78), perhaps inspired by the glass-roofed *passages* that flourished in the 1820s. Iron had been used tentatively at the Marché de la Madeleine in 1824 and more emphatically at the fish market in London in 1835, which may have impressed Louis-Napoleon. Labrouste had used cast iron to support the roof of the much more substantial Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève in 1843; only ten years later, the Halles Centrales emerged as the logical conclusion to this technological innovation. Unlike Paxton, who made a greenhouse-like Crystal Palace in London entirely of glass and iron, French architects developed a distinctive style based on the use of iron and glass sheds over masonry bases. Soon this new style was visible at a variety of public buildings, including Labrouste's Bibliothèque Nationale (1859–66; FIG. 6.80) and Hittorff's Gare du Nord

(1861–65; FIGS. 6.81 and 6.82). In this manner, French architects could sustain the rich masonry façades characteristic of Second Empire Paris while covering vast volumes of space, conveniently and economically. (The destruction of Les Halles by Georges Pompidou galvanized the French preservation movement in the same way that the destruction of New York's Pennsylvania Station provoked the first landmark legislation in the United States.)

Notwithstanding the complaints of the prince-impérial and the Goncourts, Haussmann's Paris was celebrated by the painters in Manet's circle, the artists defined by Edmond Duranty's treatise "The New Painting, some of whom are shown surrounding Manet in Fantin-Latour's 1870 *An Atelier in the Batignolles* (FIG. 6.83). Manet is at the easel; to his left is the writer and artist Zacharie Astruc. The standing figures are, left to right, the painters Otto Scolderer and Renoir, the author Emile Zola, the art *amateur* Edmond Maître, and the painters Frédéric Bazille and Monet. It is interesting to note that most of the views that we associate with the transformation of Paris were made in the 1870s or later, after Napoleon III and Haussmann were gone. In the 1860s, modern Paris was too raw, too unfinished, too muddy, and perhaps the wounds and scars too fresh. A flurry of pictures created by Monet and Renoir in 1867 (see FIGS. 6.47 and 6.48) show the sparkling capital of Europe cleaned to receive the acclamation of humanity, but not the new amenities; only Manet's view of the Exposition Universelle glimpses the strange world of the future (see FIG. 6.43). Manet in fact was fascinated by the new Paris. Antonin Proust recalled "that day we walked up from what was to be the boulevard Malesherbes, amid demolitions interspersed with the yawning gaps of leveled lots. The Monceau district not yet laid out. Manet kept stopping me. At a certain point, an isolated cedar loomed from a devastated garden. . . . Farther on in, men working as wreckers stood out, white against a less white wall that crumbled under their blows, swathed in a cloud of dust]. Manet lingered, lost in a long admiration of the spectacle."¹⁴⁹ Manet's *Balcony* (FIG. 6.84), though primarily a riff on Goya's *Majas on a Balcony*, was nonetheless a reflection of the new social habits, decried by the Goncourts, which were encouraged by the physical transformation of the city.



In the 1870s, after the trauma of the war and the Commune, the Impressionists delighted in the urban spectacle, especially from the privileged viewpoint of the balcony. Monet shows the boulevard des Capucines, with the trees planted by Rambuteau, functioning precisely in the way that it was intended (FIG. 6.85).¹⁵⁰ Traffic, messy with horse droppings, was relegated to the center of the street; pedestrians occupied the broad sidewalks, shopping, strolling, watching. In Degas's picture, the vicomte Lepic braves the crossing of the place de la Concorde with determination while his children and dog act out the disjunctive nature of urban experience (FIG. 6.86). Caillebotte's work catalogued the entire range of activity of Baudelaire's archetypal

flâneur: "The street becomes a dwelling, . . . [the flâneur] is as much at home among the facades of the houses as a citizen is in his four walls. To him, the shiny, enameled signs of business are at least as good a wall ornament as an oil painting is to a bourgeois in his salon. The walls of buildings are the desk against which he presses his notebooks; news-stands are his libraries and the terraces of the cafés are the balconies from which he looks down on his household after his work is done."¹⁵¹ In the 1890s, Pissarro would create a celebrated series of views of Haussmann's streets that would come to define what modern life looks like, a vision unchanged in Paris to this day.

6.86
Edgar Degas (1834–1917)
*The Vicomte Lepic and his
Daughters at the Place de la
Concorde*, c. 1875
Oil on canvas, 31 x 46½ in.
(79 x 118 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, St. Petersburg

The Salle LePeletier

Following Victor Orsini's attempt to assassinate Napoleon III on January 14, 1858, in the crowded street in front of the opera house in Paris, the Salle Le Peletier, Haussmann began to make plans for a new, commodious, and, above all, safer Opéra, a theater worthy of the new Paris that he and the emperor had conceived. In fact, the city had long been deprived of a proper theater for the opera. Chased by fires from one temporary structure to the next, the Paris opera, officially known as the Académie Royale (or Impériale) de Musique, received worthy accommodations only at the end of the eighteenth century, when it moved into the Théâtre des Arts, a commercial theater designed by the architect Victor Louis in 1791–93; it was located on what is today the Square Louvois, facing the rue Richelieu entrance of the Bibliothèque Nationale. Louis's greatest triumph was the Grand Théâtre, built in Bordeaux from 1773–80, where he developed the tripartite plan of grand foyer, monumental stair, and auditorium that continues to define opera architecture today. There he also created a horseshoe-shaped auditorium with relatively open balcony boxes, supported by paired columns placed where the side tiers joined the center tiers. He re-created this auditorium at the Théâtre des Arts in Paris. It was considered the best hall in Paris until the duc de Berry was assassinated at the entrance on February 13, 1820. In the ensuing scandal, exacerbated by the fragility of the Bourbon regime, the government demanded that the theater be destroyed and a new one built immediately. An architect named François Debret was hired to create a new structure in the garden on the rue Le Peletier of the Hôtel de Choiseul, and he simply rebuilt, in exactly one year, the auditorium of Louis's Théâtre des Arts on the new site, using much of the old theater's actual materials. The stage was inserted just behind the salons of the Hôtel de Choiseul, which were converted, cleverly but inadequately, to serve as the foyers for the singers and dancers. The Foyer de la Danse is the room depicted in Degas's exquisite *Dance Class at the Opéra* (FIG. 6.87), although here Degas has regularized the columns. In fact, the foyer was installed in the upper half of a two-story room, where visitors would find only the top portion of the pilasters and a cornice that was much too deep for the

proportions of the truncated room. Although the facilities for stage and administration were as inadequate as the rehearsal space, the familiar auditorium was well loved. As Victor Fournel wrote in *Paris dans sa splendeur* (1863), "For an edifice made of plaster and debris, built in haste and destined to serve as a shelter for only a few years, the theater is really not too bad. The peristyle is wide and does not lack grandeur. Despite the narrow street, access to theater is easy, thanks to the neighboring passageway. The interior decoration is rich and full of taste: the foyer is splendid. The hall holds 1,800 places."¹⁵² Gas lighting, which made miraculous effects possible, was installed in 1822.

Although Saint Petersburg could boast better dancing and Milan better singing, the Paris opera company was one of the preeminent companies in Europe. The Salle Le Peletier was where grand opera, as we know it today, was invented: tragic tales from history cast in elaborate settings with complex stage effects and sumptuous costumes, relieved at regular intervals by capricious ballets.¹⁵³ Giacomo Meyerbeer's *Robert le Diable* was the pièce de résistance of this genre. First performed on November 21, 1831, it was repeated an amazing 758 times in Paris before it was retired on August 28, 1893. It was a warhorse for the great baritone Jean-Baptiste Faure; the sets by Eugène Ciceri, the chief designer of the Paris Opéra from 1824–47, were emblematic of the historicizing style of Romantic theater. The most celebrated moment of the opera was the ballet of dead nuns set in a Romanesque cloister. Of a performance given in 1870, Théophile Gautier wrote, "Shadows rise and take shape dimly in the gloom; one hears faint rustlings, like the beating of moth's wings; indistinct forms stir in the depths of darkness, stand out against each pillar, ascend from each stone slab like wisps of smoke. A vivid beam of light, produced by an electric wire, penetrates the arches, searching, outlining in the bluish obscurity female forms that move under their white shrouds with a deathly sensuality."¹⁵⁴ This was the ghoulish ballet that Degas depicted in his famous painting of 1871 (FIG. 6.88), which was purchased by Faure. In it Degas pointedly contrasts the ethereal doings on the stage with the prosaic happenings in the foreground: the subscriber Albert Hecht using his opera glasses to spy on someone in an upper box while the bassoonist, Degas's friend Désiré Dihau, performs



with the rest of the orchestra.

Meyerbeer had an immeasurable effect on the Paris Opéra; not only were his works the most frequently performed (*Les Huguenots* [1826] vied with *Robert Le Diable*), but they strongly influenced subsequent works produced for Paris, from Verdi's *Les Vêpres siciliennes* (1855) and *Don Carlos* (1867) to Charles Gounod's *Sapho* (1851) and *La Nonne sanglante* (1854) to Richard Wagner's *Thannhäuser* (1861).¹⁵⁵ The first of Wagner's operas to be produced in Paris, *Thannhäuser* had to be modified to include the ballet that had become obligatory at the beginning of the third act: many of the subscribers, generally members of the Jockey Club, by tradition arrived at the theater only in time to see their favorite dancers, of whom many were kept women. The novelty of Wagner's music and the emphatically non-Latin subject of the plot provoked immense dissatisfaction at the Jockey Club, although those with advanced taste recognized the importance of Wagner's achievement. Henri Fantin-Latour paid homage to

Thannhäuser in his painting of 1864 (FIG. 6.89), finding in Wagner's music a parallel to his efforts to fuse Realism with Romanticism. Anyone with a pretense to culture, and most of the important painters in Paris, whether Ingres and Delacroix, Manet and Degas, or Rousseau and Corot, attended the opera regularly, whether it was the Salle Le Peletier, the Théâtre Italien (where opera was sung in Italian rather than French), or the Théâtre Lyrique (which mounted less ambitious productions than did the Salle Le Peletier). They often found inspiration on the stage. Corot's tender *Orpheus* (FIG. 6.90) is indebted to Hector Berlioz's 1858 revival of Christoph Willibald Glück's opera of the same name, one of the most popular of the early operas in the Paris repertoire. It illustrates the complex interchange that occurred between stage and studio: on the one hand Corot's misty morning scenes are said to have been inspired by Ciceri's opera sets, while on the other hand the sets and staging for Berlioz's rendition of Glück's *Orpheus* were consciously modeled on paintings by Poussin.¹⁵⁶

6.87

Edgar Degas
(1834–1917)

*The Dance Class at
the Opera*, 1872

Oil on canvas,
12 13/16 x 18 7/16 in.
(32 x 46 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

The New Opéra

6.88

Edgar Degas
(1834–1917)

*The Ballet from
"Robert le Diable,"* 1872

Oil on canvas,
26 7/16 x 21 1/4 in.
(66 x 54.3 cm)

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
New York;

H. O. Havemeyer
Collection, bequest of
Mrs. H. O. Havemeyer,
1929

The 1858 assassination attempt provided the perfect pretext to push a new development plan through the extensive and often recalcitrant state and city bureaucracies. Tracing the history of the project, one finds an ideal case history of how government can realize a huge undertaking that otherwise would easily founder at countless points along the way. By the end of the year Haussmann had condemned a small, insalubrious neighborhood on the boulevard des Capucines, just where it became the boulevard des Italiens, only a short distance west of the Salle Le Peletier.¹⁵⁷ It was a low-lying, poorly drained district wedged between the old ramparts of Paris (the route of the Grands Boulevards)

and the hills of Clichy and Pigalle. A ready target for Haussmann's battering rams, the district had never been adequately developed, and it lay conveniently placed between the fashionable residential quarter of La Nouvelle Athènes, just to the east, and the busy Gare Saint-Lazare, just to the west. It would quickly become the center of the new Paris—the location of the best hotels, the best shops, the best clubs—and the most complete expression of Haussmann's idea for a new urban ensemble. A state commission, led by Charles Chaix d'Est-Ange, reviewed Haussmann's proposal for a new Opéra as well as eight counterproposals. As one would expect, they decided that Haussmann's plan, "the project that places the Opéra at the center of Paris, in the richest, most lively quarter, presents in this context the best conditions."¹⁵⁸ Charles Rohault de Fleury, official architect of the Paris Opéra, sketched the new site plan and provided a design for the theater: a low, two-tiered Venetian-style loggia at the entrance, surmounted by a pedimented attic over the stage, flanked left and right by curving arcades to provide special entrances for the subscribers and for the emperor.

Rohault de Fleury considered himself the obvious architect for the new building, and he was favored not only by Haussmann but by the key minister, Achille Fould, minister of state. But Fould was replaced in autumn 1860 by comte Walewski, who unlike Fould wanted to fulfill the emperor's desire to run a competition, announced on December 29, 1860: "Considering that the composition of the theater project excites public attention, with good reason, and that it is the duty of the administration to call all of the architects and solicit all of the intelligences, a public competition is thus open for the study of a projected Opéra to be built in Paris."¹⁵⁹ Although only one month was given, there were 170 submissions, from which the jury—composed of leading architects such as Félix Duban, Jacques-Ignace Hittorff, and Hector-Martin Lefuel—chose sixteen semifinalists and seven finalists. The writer Théophile Gautier visited the public display of the proposals at the Palais de l'Industrie and noted that "one or two promenades suffice to eliminate the impossible and fantastic projects—the crystal palaces, the Alhambras, the Hindu pagodas, the wedding cakes, and the architectures of the future. The reasonable projects distinguish themselves from the crowd of monstrosities,





and the circle of choice remains small; yet it is still large enough for the honor of the competition."¹⁶⁰ Much to the dismay of the Emperor and empress, their favorite architect and friend, Eugène-Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, did not make it into the circle of choice. His project, characterized by a nearly transparent screen of stacked arcades reminiscent, in its thin and taut façade, of the architecture of the reign of Louis-Philippe, did not succeed because the interior was conceived as a warren of narrow corridors and inadequate stairs.¹⁶¹ A little-known architect named Léon Ginain placed first. Charles Garnier placed fifth. Dissatisfied with the results of the first competition, the committee invited the finalists to reconsider their plans in light of a new, more explicit program. This time Garnier was unanimously acclaimed the winner. The jury cited the "rare and superior qualities in the handsome and happy disposition of the planes, the monumental and char-

acteristic appearance of the façades and the cross-sections."¹⁶² One of the members of the jury explained to the architect's wife that his plan had won because of its remarkable "simplicity, clarity, logic, grandeur, [and] for the exterior disposition which announced the plan in three distinct parts—the public halls, the auditorium, and the stage"¹⁶³ (FIG 6.95).

Garnier was an unlikely winner. He had no substantial buildings to his name, he held an entry-level position at the Service des Bâtiments Civils, and he had only recently returned to Paris from his five-year stint in Italy, Greece, and Turkey as the recipient of the Prix de Rome, which he had won in 1848. His Rome prize was also unexpected, since he had had neither a privileged background (he was born to the family of an enterprising blacksmith on the famously poor rue Mouffetard) nor a distinguished record at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In 1848, as in 1860, he rose to the top

6.89

Henri Fantin-Latour
(1836–1904)

*Thannhäuser on the
Venusberg*, 1864

Oil on canvas,
38½ x 51⅞ in.

(97.5 x 130.2 cm)

Los Angeles County
Museum of Art;
gift of Mr. and Mrs.
Charles Boyer

of the competition by demonstrating a special talent for clearly expressed, hierarchical arrangements of space and progression—the epitome of what today is recognized as Beaux-Arts architecture.

By selecting a young and inexperienced architect, the jury proclaimed its faith in the government's tradition-bound system of training architects at the École des Beaux-Arts and supervising construction at the Service des Bâtiments Civils. The commission was quick to submit his plan to the review of more experienced architects—Félix Duban, an architect of the new Louvre, was one—and to compel him to adopt significant changes. Yet overnight, thirty-five-year-old Charles Garnier became responsible for the most celebrated building project in all of Europe and the highest-paid architect in France: “A monument as considerable as the Opéra

in a city like Paris, in the state of grandeur and sumptuousness that the modern embellishments have created, is hardly something one can decide upon lightly, without risking a future of useless recriminations.”¹⁶⁴ Théophile Gautier, who had met Garnier on the boat to Constantinople in June 1852, was one of the few critics—outside of the jury—who perceived the quality of Garnier's project from the beginning.¹⁶⁵ He knew that the architect's “most serious studies, coupled with a grand fertility of imagination and a rare good sense, render him quite worthy of such a difficult task,” and he applauded the architect's decision to make a tour of the great opera houses of Europe,¹⁶⁶ which Garnier summarized in his book *Le Théâtre* (1871). In it Garnier reveals how his design for the new building was predicated on the procession of visitors—whether emperor,

6.90

Camille Corot
(1796–1875)

*Orpheus Leading
Eurydice from the
Underworld*, 1861

Oil on canvas,
44 ¼ x 54 in.

(112.3 x 137.1 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts,
Houston; museum
purchase with funds
provided by the Agnes
Cullen Arnold
Endowment Fund



subscriber, or standing-room attendee—from the vestibule to the foyer, up the grand stair, and into the auditorium. These spaces were conceived to display this procession as an event perhaps equal to that happening on the stage. The privileged spaces behind the stage—such as the notorious Foyer de la Danse, where dancers received their admirers—were as important to Garnier’s plan as the public rooms at the front of the theater.

This is the kernel of Garnier’s thought: to provide a setting that would make more splendid the act of attending the theater. He developed a fascinating variety of spaces to receive the visitors: the arcades on the place de l’Opéra which lead pedestrians to the sober but vast vestibule; the porte-cochère under the right pavilion that allowed subscribers to alight from their carriages before gathering, with their footmen, in their richly sculpted, cryptlike vestibule beneath the auditorium; a horseshoe-shaped ramp leading to the left pavilion, where the emperor and his retinue could be driven directly to a small but elaborate vestibule on the same level as the imperial box (FIG. 6.91). In his descriptions of the public rooms, Garnier revealed the gendered inflection with which they were conceived: “But these two vestibules must look different. The first is, as I have said, a kind of huge waiting room [*salle des pas perdus*]; the second is instead a grand salon destined for the most elegant part of society. Since women rarely come on foot to a large theater, and if the vestibule for pedestrians is rather given over to men, the contrary is true for this new salon [the subscriber’s vestibule], which above all is given over to women. [. . .] From that one understands that the decorative character of the two different vestibules must be different, following their different use, and if the former must have a more grandiose and simple appearance, the second must have a more intimate and elegant aspect.”¹⁶⁷

All entrances—except for the emperor’s—lead to the grand staircase, the centerpiece, literally and figuratively, of Garnier’s composition (FIGS. 6.91, 6.93, and 6.94). “Today,” Garnier wrote, “when luxury is extensive, where comfort is demanded everywhere, where the departure of spectators is followed with interest by those who love to see the movements of an elegant and varied crowd, . . . when eyes demand to have their pleasure satisfied as much as the mind, all these things impose on the architect large and monumental arrange-

ments, roomy and conveniently distributed staircases.

In a large theater there can be no doubt about the route to follow from entry to exit, and it is necessary that the motif of utility *par excellence* also be an artistic motif that flatters the splendors of the women’s apparel. The form and the placement of the staircases must derive from these two points. One must be guided by the practical study of movement of the crowd and by the desire to develop art on a grand scale and with sumptuousness.”¹⁶⁸

Garnier designed a palatial interior court, ringed by an arcade of paired marble columns that frame a double stair that rises from the basement vestibule to the pedestrian’s entrance at street level and then climbs in a single broad ramp to the imperial loge before splitting into a pair of ramps that lead to the tiers above. Having studied Garnier’s plans as well as the elaborate plaster model displayed in 1863, Théophile Gautier anticipated the spectacle to come: “The curious will be able to lean [on the balconies] as in a canvas by Paul Veronese, spectator and spectacle at the same time, and to watch at their ease this marvel of modern civilization that one calls the ‘opera exit,’ that is that cascade of diamonds, pearls, feathers, flowers, white shoulders, satin, velvet, moire, gauze, lace, which will froth on white marble steps, scintillating in the brightest lights, encased by an enchanting architecture.”¹⁶⁹ Garnier and Gautier both expected the opera to be furnished with the newly lavish costumes worn by women of the Second Empire, more elaborate than anything worn since the court of Marie-Antoinette. These were the dresses that became the subjects of paintings by Mary Cassatt, Manet, Morisot, Renoir, and Tissot (FIGS. 6.97 and 6.98).

During intermission, these costumes would be paraded in the Grand Foyer, an immense room on the front of the building, self-consciously reminiscent of Versailles’s Hall of Mirrors. Garnier actually observed how people strolled and concluded that they presented themselves in groups of two or three; the width of his foyer was then calculated to allow three groups of three to pass comfortably down the length of the room.¹⁷⁰

Unfortunately, it would be many years before that cascade scintillated in the lights of the Grand Escalier. In the first years of work, 1861–63, Garnier had to refine his plans while organizing a huge workforce of architects, engineers, inspectors, draftsmen, masons, carpenters, painters, sculptors, roofers, and blacksmiths.

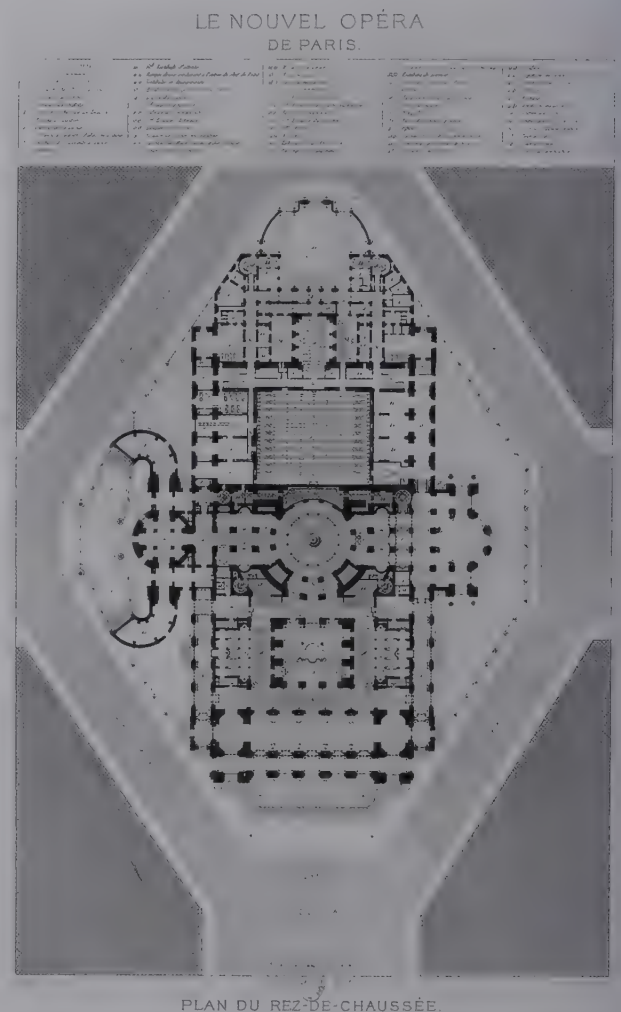
More difficult was the bureaucratic wrangling. As the head of the project, he had to fight for his budget each year; inevitably the state appropriated less than requested, while pressing for speedier work and cheaper materials. Garnier quickly understood that the emperor wanted the project completed in time for the Exposition Universelle of 1867, yet in 1864 Napoleon III declared that a pleasure temple would not take precedence over the alleviation of suffering, so he demanded that work on the new hospital, the Hôtel Dieu, be begun so that the two projects could be completed simultaneously. He informed his minister Vaillant, "This combination, I recognize, has no practical advantage; but from a moral point of view, I think it very important that the monument of pleasure not be erected before the shelter of suffering."¹⁷¹ The hospital construction enforced some delay, but far worse was the gradual realization that the 25 million francs approved by the state in 1862 would not be sufficient to complete the project. In order to ready the façade for unveiling in August 1867, Garnier had to direct work away from the interior to pay for the embellishment of the exterior. By 1868 the project was in debt. The mounting crisis with Prussia drew men, machines, and metal from the project; the war and subsequent socialist government in Paris, the Commune, halted construction entirely. Not until 1871, when the Third Republic was consolidated, did work recommence.

When the scaffolding was dropped from the façade in 1867, Gautier wrote an elegant appreciation of the Opéra's exterior (FIG. 6.92). "The façade is composed of a foundation with projections at either end, pierced by seven arcades, with intervals ornamented with sculptural groups, statues, and medallions. Above an order of paired Corinthian columns rise, creating seven wide bays and forming what in Italy is called a loggia. Two arched pediments on the entablatures of the projecting bays happily break the horizontality of the line. This order supports an attic decorated with groups, bas-reliefs, and cartouches, terminating on the horizon with a garland of tragic and comic masks in bronze."¹⁷² Gautier marveled at the restrained polychromy Garnier employed in the façade, using colored marbles for the smaller columns placed within the loggia bays, as well as for plaques and reliefs. In earlier articles Gautier had praised the bronze domes that would crown the audito-

rium and the pavilions attached to the left and right of the central building, and had expressed his hope that they would be brightly gilded, as they are in Turkey: "All these details of different colors and materials accent and warm the vast surface of the façade."¹⁷³ Gautier, however, did not express the majority view. In his 1878 monograph *Le Nouvel Opéra de Paris*, Garnier humourously summarized the complaints he had heard: "Unable to make it beautiful, you made it rich!"¹⁷⁴ He went on to enumerate the alleged defects of the façade: "(1) The first story is too low; (2) the polychrome coloration is heresy in Paris; (3) there is too much gold, and the effect is too rich; (4) it looks like a dresser piled with bibelots."¹⁷⁵

Not only the variety of materials but the rich complement of sculpture became evident when the façade

6.91 (right)
Charles Garnier
(1825–1898)
Plan of the Nouvel
Opéra, 1861–75
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France



6.92 (opposite)
Charles Garnier
(1825–1898)
Paris Opéra, 1867–75
Façade

was unveiled. Most striking were the four great figural groups facing the place de l'Opéra that were unveiled in 1869. François Jouffroy, Eugène Guillaume, and Jean Joseph Perraud provided fine neoclassical groups that closely followed Garnier's instructions, which included measured sketches. Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux, however, departed from Garnier's strict guidelines and provided a

stunning group that is considered today to be the finest independent work of art on the premises (FIG. 6.99). Most of the Opéra commissions went to artists whom Garnier had met at the Académie de France in Rome, but Carpeaux had not known him there and he was "overjoyed" when he was chosen to fill one of the most beautiful spaces of the Opéra: "I am assigned to do one





6.93 (above)

Charles Garnier (1825–1898)

*Nouvel Opéra, Watercolor Drawing of
the Staircase, c. 1861*

India ink and watercolor on paper
Bibliothèque Nationale de France

6.94 (opposite)

Charles Garnier (1825–1898)

Grand Staircase, Palais Garnier, 1875

of the large bas-reliefs on the façade in the spirit of those on the Arc de Triomphe.”¹⁷⁶ Garnier told Carpeaux “to think ahead to the overall arrangement because there must not be three figures lined up like sticks one next to the other.” After several tries, Garnier recalled, Carpeaux “took a pen, a scrap of paper, and in an instant sketched a few lines intersecting marvelously, a few beautifully composed movements, and in a brief five minutes his group was found! It was, with very few changes, the outline of the group that he later executed and that created such a sensation in the world.”¹⁷⁷

On August 2, 1869, Gautier informed his readers that Carpeaux’s group was “full of gusto, life, and movement.” Even if Carpeaux’s muse of Choreography was not the one known at the Opéra—“sculpture does not allow leotards and tutus”—Gautier was rather surprised by the nudity: “There is not the least feeling of antiquity in the female forms. Undress the old biddies in Rubens’s *Kermesse*, and you will have the Bacchantes of M. Carpeaux.” After a long description of the composition, Gautier concluded that “there are, without doubt, some very large faults in this group; it will be severely criticized, but the qualities that it contains are so robust that one could not prevent oneself from admiring it.”¹⁷⁸ Three weeks later, the work was indeed severely criticized: an anonymous citizen splattered paint on it. There was an uproar in the press; indignant fathers wrote to say that they would no longer be able to attend the opera with their wives and daughters.¹⁷⁹

Ultimately the emperor intervened, and a new sculpture was commissioned to replace the Carpeaux. The Franco-Prussian War created a delay in the work during which time the new sculptor, Guméry, died of tuberculosis. Several subsequent attempts to replace the work failed, and the group remained in place until, suffering erosion from Paris pollution, they were brought to the Louvre in 1964. An exact copy was commissioned as a replacement at the Opéra. The original is today in the Musée d’Orsay.

The unveiling of the façade made clear Garnier’s debt to Perrault’s design of the east facade of the Cour Carré of the Louvre and to the Garde-Meuble on the place de la Concorde, two distinguished French prototypes that doubtless bought the young architect votes during the design competition. Indeed, more than anything else, Garnier’s opera is a highly creative assemblage of





6.95

Charles Garnier
(1825–1898)

*Nouvel Opéra, Drawing
of Cross-Section on the
Longitudinal Section of
the Foyer de la Danse,
c. 1861*

India ink and watercolor
on paper, 26 x 33 7/16 in.
(65 x 83.5 cm)
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

motifs from baroque French architecture, but Gautier insisted on its originality: “The new Opéra will take its place among the most beautiful monuments of Paris and will be one of the seven marvels of the city. In this colossal edifice, of which the attic above the stage will equal in height the towers of Notre Dame, all is new, researched, invented expressly, and does not recall any known forms. There is nothing of the Baroque, everything is original. The capitals, the astragals, the modillions, the cornices, the keystones, the consoles, if you look at them carefully, will surprise you with unexpected and charming detail. We do not know if this is the architecture of the future, but it is no longer the architecture of the past.”¹⁸⁰ Oddly enough, that was precisely the reaction Empress Eugénie was said to have experienced when Garnier presented the designs for her approval: “What is that style? Why, it is not a style at all! It is neither Greek, nor Louis XVI, not even Louis xv!” Emboldened by youthful indignance, Garnier reputedly replied, “Those styles defined their times. This style is Napoleon III, and you are complaining!”¹⁸¹ Just as the new Louvre embodies the Renaissance

revival under Napoleon III, so does the new Opéra exemplify the baroque revival that was an important component of midcentury eclecticism.

When the Salle Le Peletier burned down in 1874, the conservative government of the Third Republic was compelled, as an issue of national prestige, to complete the Opéra quickly. Garnier was required to alter the imperial entrance (reserved for the head of state, it ultimately became the library), the imperial cipher, and a smoking parlor, but little else changed. The state demanded economies, but the supervising architect, Louis Duc, successfully defended Garnier, stating that an impoverished interior would be unworthy of the splendid exterior and provoke widespread criticism. On January 5, 1875, the building was inaugurated with a torrent of self-congratulation. A selection of great French opera—excerpts from Gioacchino Rossini, Daniel Auber, Fromental Halévy, Meyerbeer, Léo Delibes—was performed, and the president of the Republic, General MacMahon, bestowed on Garnier the officer’s cross of the Légion d’Honneur in the former imperial loge. But Garnier was simultaneously subjected to

the humiliation of being required to sit in the second balcony, for which he had to remit 120 francs. His vindication came after the performance, when the crowd caught sight of him as he descended from his second-class box. The emotional moment was engraved for *Le Monde illustré*. Madame Garnier recalled, "As soon as they recognized the architect of the Opéra, they shouted from every corner 'Bravo, Garnier! bravo, bravo Garnier!' with frenetic clapping. Since we were in the second loges, this

glorious path was quite long, and from the depths of the wide and long hallways, came applause and bravos."¹⁸²

The Foyer de la Danse

The space at the new Opéra that elicited the most curiosity was the Foyer de la Danse. It housed an institution unique to Paris. While almost every theater



6.96

Anonymous

*Nouvel Opéra, the Foyer
de la Danse during an
Entracte, c. 1880*

Watercolor,
26 ¹³/₁₆ x 24 ¹/₂ in.
(67 x 61 cm)

Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

maintained a room in which artists could receive the grateful audience, the Foyer de la Danse had evolved into a government-sanctioned bordello where high-ranking officials or rich subscribers enjoyed access to dancers who frequently bestowed sexual favors in exchange for money or gifts. The stage had long been the refuge of women who sought to escape social mores, parents, or husbands, and in the eighteenth and nine-

teenth centuries many of these women flaunted their independence in high-profile liaisons with powerful men. But the thinly veiled prostitution that occurred at the Académie Royale de Musique more likely derived from the pitiful wages that were paid to all but the great stars. The state—and often the dancers' mothers—expected that their salary of sixty francs per month would be augmented somehow. In their journal, the



6.97

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
(1841–1919)

La Loge, 1874

Oil on canvas, 32 x 25 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.
(80 x 64 cm)

The Courtauld Gallery,
London



Goncourts outlined the problem while contradicting the widely held assumption that dancers extorted large sums of money from their admirers.

I was talking with Narrey about all the little dancers at the Opera. Narrey tells me that the novels with their tired old stories are stupid to say of a man ruined by his dancer, "The rats [young dancers were known as rats] were devouring his fortune."

Nothing could be more untrue. There are not more than a dozen that are truly kept women, and those are still much less expensive than the grand courtesans. They mainly lead family lives. Many live with their mother or have a relationship with a worker. Still, one could have any one of them, one day, at the cost of five *louis*, on a day of need. The Opéra only gives them six hundred francs a year. One of the reasons that they cannot truly be kept is

6.98

Mary Cassat (1844–1926)

Woman in Black at the Opera,
1880

Oil on canvas, 32 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 26 $\frac{7}{16}$ in.
(81 x 66 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts, Boston;
The Hayden Collection

because in the street, without the gauze and the costumes, they are not very striking; one has to be forewarned to find them pretty; they are generally beauties of the footlights. And for all that, there are a dozen delicious ones, some entrancing pretty little faces, some perfect bodies, above all one who is called "the child of Venus and Polichinelle" because she resembles at the same time that mother and that father.¹⁸³

The Foyer was accessible only to certain performers and a restricted group of rich subscribers, government ministers, and individuals who had important dealings with the Opéra. The list of the 146 happy few published in January 1859 reads like a who's who of Second Empire society: the composers and librettists Auber, Gautier, Gounod, Halévy, Meyerbeer, Rossini, Scribe, and Verdi; comte Baciochi, first chamberlain of the court; Achille Fould, prime minister (minister of state); Baron Haussmann, prefect of the Seine; the duc de Morny, half-brother of the emperor and president of the Corps Législatif; comte de Nieuwerkerke, director general of the Imperial Museums; and subscribers such as baron Clary, comte de Greffulhe, comte Lepic, comte de Noailles, prince Poniatowski, and prince Wagram.¹⁸⁴ By 1863 Charles Garnier, Richard Wagner, and prince Radziwill had been added to the list of those to be admitted to the Foyer of the Salle Le Peletier.¹⁸⁵ These men (nonperforming women were not welcome) entered the Foyer from the stage, creating another phenomenon virtually unique to Paris: the constant presence of top-hatted men darting behind the stage sets. Over the years the directors at the Opéra vainly tried to curb the practice; Nérée Desarbres wrote in exasperation: "I do not know what Art can gain from the presence of subscribers on the stage, but I know well what the ensemble of performances lose."¹⁸⁶

Edgar Degas captured this practice in any number of pictures set on the stage. Perhaps the most famous is the double portrait of Ludovic Halévy and Albert Cavé (FIG. 6.101). Son of Luigi Cherubini's favorite student, Fromental Halévy, Ludovic Halévy was secretary to the powerful duc de Morny by day and a popular writer by night. He contributed short stories to the review *La Vie parisienne* and wrote, with Hector Crémieux and later Henri Meilhac, the books for Jacques Offenbach's comic operas, and crowned his

career with the libretto for Georges Bizet's *Carmen*. Degas had befriended him at the Lycée Louis-le-Grand and remained an intimate of his family until Degas's reactionary stance on the Dreyfus affair forced them apart in 1897. In April 1879, during the run of the fourth Impressionist exhibition in Paris, Halévy noted in his journal, "Yesterday Degas exhibited a double portrait of Cavé and me on stage, standing in the wings, face-to-face. There I am looking serious in a place of frivolity; just what Degas wanted." Albert Cavé, whose mother, Elisa Blavot, was an influential painter and whose father, Clément Boulanger, was a former student of Ingres, had been adopted by his mother's second husband, Edmond Cavé, who was superintendent of fine arts in the 1840s. Albert Cavé became the chief theatrical censor at the Ministry of the Interior and the best friend of Halévy. The two of them, wearing their hats, overcoats, and red badges of the Légion d'Honneur, are shown conversing as if on a street corner even though they are almost certainly in the midst of a performance. Throughout his career, Degas included in his pictures of ballet performances the top-hatted silhouette of an *abonné* (subscriber) lurking in the wings, adding a sinister, voyeuristic note to the fairy-tale scenes.

Halévy recorded his own impressions of life backstage in a set of short stories first published in the early 1870s and republished in 1883, *La Famille Cardinal*. These stories recount the lives of two imaginary sisters named Cardinal as they grow up in the ranks of the corps de ballet at the Opéra, encountering writers, artists, and senators in a fairly sordid search for recognition and money that is overseen by their impoverished parents. In the mid-1870s Degas executed several monotypes that illustrated scenes in Halévy's tales, brilliantly capturing the humor as well as the desperate circumstances of life backstage (FIG. 6.100).¹⁸⁷

The Foyer that Garnier provided for the new Opéra was arguably the most lavish brothel salon in Paris. Placed immediately behind the stage, and communicating with it, the room is characterized by huge mirrors, an enormous bronze chandelier, libidinous paintings of the dance by Gustave Boulanger, and gaudy gilt columns (FIG. 6.96). Garnier felt defensive about the decor; the rich upper half had been completed prior to the 1870 war, while the plainer lower half was completed under

6.99 (opposite)
Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux
(1827–1875)
The Genius of Dance,
1868
Plaster,
91 3/8 x 58 1/4 x 45 1/4 in.
(232 x 148 x 115 cm)
Musée d'Orsay





6.100

Edgar Degas
(1834-1917)

*The Cardinal Sisters
Talking to Their
Admirers*, 1876-77

Monotype in black ink
on paper, 10¼ x 7½ in.
(26.1 x 19.1 cm)
Musée du Louvre

the restraints imposed by the administration of the Third Republic. He wrote, "To harmonize the jewelbox with the jewels [i.e. the room and the dancers], the architecture of the Foyer had to be a little fantastic, lively, and, so to speak, dancing and animated. . . . Thus the bastard and somewhat dissolute style can adapt itself, without too much improbability, to Spanish, Italian, German or French architecture of the last two or three hundred years, and, above all, meld with the

decorative combinations used in the whimsical rather than historical ballets."¹⁸⁸ Although the top-hatted visitors were banned at the beginning of this century, and with them the endemic solicitation, the room remains in use for rehearsals and receptions. It can still be glimpsed on the first night of the season, when the cavernous stage is fully opened and the grand parade (*grand défilé*) of all the dancers in the company emerges from the depths of the infamous Foyer.



6.101

Edgar Degas
(1834-1917)

*Portraits of Friends in
the Wings, 1879*

Pastel and distemper on
paper, 31 x 21 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(79 x 55 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

THE THIRD REPUBLIC

1870-1889

Andrew Carrington Shelton



“L’ANNÉE TERRIBLE” : THE SIEGE
OF PARIS AND THE COMMUNE

It took less than two months for the *fête impériale*—the splendor and pageantry that was Paris under the reign of Napoleon III—to come crashing to the ground. The trouble was sparked in July 1870 when rumors began to circulate that the Prussians were seeking to impose a Hohenzollern prince on the Spanish throne.¹⁸⁹ France, fearful of the spread of German influence on both her frontiers, duly protested, initiating a period of tense diplomatic negotiations between the two nations that culminated with a meeting between the French ambassador and the Prussian king on July 13 at Ems. Although this meeting seems to have been productive, Otto von Bismarck, the Prussian chancellor, who was yearning for war, published an inflammatory account of the proceedings in which it appeared that both sides had been egregiously affronted. The ruse paid off; within days of the publication of the notorious “Telegraph of Ems,” huge crowds had taken to the streets of Paris with cries of “A Berlin!” Such patriotic fervor proved more than Napoleon III could resist; on July 19 he formally declared war on Prussia.

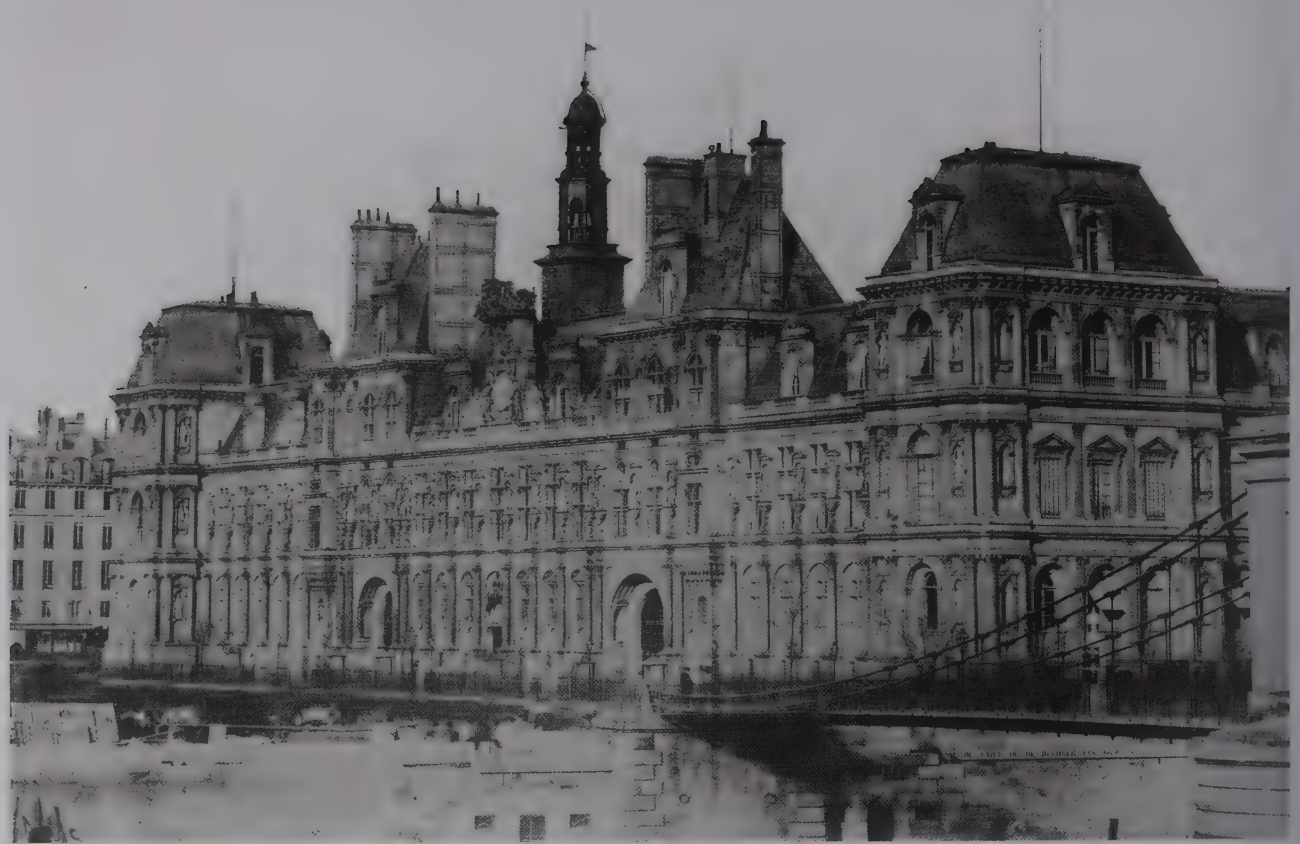
The subsequent defeat of France was numbingly swift and devastatingly complete. On September 2, a large contingent of French troops under the personal command of the emperor was captured by the Prussians at Sedan. News of the disaster sparked uprisings throughout France. In Paris, crowds gathered before the Palais Bourbon, where the Corps Législatif formally declared the collapse of the Empire on September 4. That same day, members of the Parisian delegation to the National Assembly proceeded to the Hôtel-de-Ville (FIG. 6.103), the traditional center of radical political action in France, where they proclaimed a republic, installing themselves as leaders of the so-called Government of National Defense.

The first order of business for the new regime was to negotiate an end to the war. The price demanded by the Prussians proved intolerably high, however: in addition

to a huge war indemnity of 5 billion francs, France would have to cede the entire eastern province of Alsace as well as a good portion of Lorraine to the enemy. These demands enraged the leaders of the new government, who, under the slogan “neither an inch of our territory nor a stone of our fortresses,” steadfastly refused to capitulate.¹⁹⁰ The fateful—and utterly futile—decision to prolong the war proved particularly disastrous for Paris. By the middle of September, the Prussians had laid siege to the city, intent on starving its 2.2 million inhabitants into submission. What followed were some of the most harrowing episodes in the city’s history.¹⁹¹ By mid-November the supply of meat had run out, forcing Parisians to turn to less orthodox fare, most notably horse meat—it has been estimated that two-thirds of the city’s equine population was consumed during the siege, at the rate of some 500 to 600 animals per day¹⁹²—supplemented by fish from the polluted Seine, zoo animals, household pets, and eventually mice and rats. The city’s store of flour was also quickly depleted, forcing bakers to “supplement” their dough with rice (which remained plentiful), peas, barley, bran, and even straw. If these privations were not enough, the winter of 1870–71 proved unusually harsh, with the temperature regularly dipping below zero by the end of December. Still, the Parisians held out until the Prussians, eager to bring an end to the affair, began bombarding the southern flanks of the city on January 5. Just over three weeks later, on January 28, 1871, an armistice was finally signed.

The city’s nightmare was only beginning, however. The national elections held on February 8, 1871, resulted in a large majority for the right, with monarchists—both Legitimists and Orléanists—far outnumbering Republicans in the newly reconstituted National Assembly. Thus the fledgling Third Republic seemed to be on the point of collapse. Elected chief executive on February 13, the aged Adolphe Thiers, revolutionary

6.102 (opposite)
Hippolyte-Auguste
Collard (1812–c. 1895)
*The Tuileries after
Burning*, 1871
Albumen silver print
from a glass negative,
8 7/16 x 10 13/16 in.
(20.8 x 27 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art



6.103

Charles Marville
(1816–1879)

The Old Hôtel de Ville,
c. 1865–70

Photograph,
18 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(48 x 38 cm)

Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris

of 1830 and former prime minister under Louis-Philippe, resisted calls for an immediate restoration of the monarchy, pledging instead to uphold the Republic as “the government that divides us least.”¹⁹³ Thiers’s hopes for a peaceful transition from Empire to Republic by way of a humiliating national defeat proved unrealistic, however. A relatively small but vocal minority of patriots, led by the left-wing politicians of Paris, were appalled by the peace agreement that the chief executive had brokered with Bismarck, one that essentially gave the Prussians every thing that they wanted—the 5-billion-franc indemnity as well as Alsace and Lorraine. To make matters worse, Thiers also granted the Germans a triumphal entry into the city on March 1.

With resentment over Thiers’s “capitulation” to the Prussians mounting, radical elements within the capital began organizing themselves independently of the directives of the National Assembly, which, significantly, had voted to sit not in Paris but at Versailles. Things finally came to a head on Saturday, March 18, when Thiers sent government troops into the capital to retake arms that had been seized and stored in the working-class districts of Montmartre and Belleville by the

National Guard—a rather ragtag citizen militia that had assumed the task of defending Paris during the siege.¹⁹⁴ The people of Paris turned out en masse to resist this seizure, successfully persuading government troops to hold their fire. In the ensuing confusion, two commanders of the national forces—General Jules Lecomte and Clément Thomas—were captured by the insurgents and summarily shot. This act prompted the command of the government troops to evacuate Paris, leaving the city in the hands of the radical leadership of the National Guard. France thereby descended into civil war.

On March 26, elections were held in Paris to select a permanent governing council. As many of the conservative and moderate middle-class residents either had left the city at the end of the siege or chose to boycott the election in protest, the returns resulted in a victory for the radical left, thereby ending all hope for any negotiated settlement with Versailles. On March 28 this new municipal government, which called itself the Commune, was officially installed at the Hôtel de Ville amid a joyous popular *fête* that many historians regard as the ritualistic reclamation of Paris by the working-class elements that had been displaced under the Empire

by Haussmann.¹⁹⁵ Whatever the case, the atmosphere seems to have been positively euphoric. "What a day!" the Communard Jules Vallès exclaimed in his radical paper *Le Cri du peuple*—"That clear, warm sun that gilds the gun-muzzles, that scent of flowers, the flutter of flags, the murmur of the passing revolution, calm and lovely as a blue river. . . . O great Paris! . . . fatherland of honour, city of salvation, bivouac of the Revolution! Whatever may happen, if we are to be again vanquished and die tomorrow, our generation is consoled! We are repaid for twenty years of defeat and anxiety."¹⁹⁶

Although the Commune was dominated by militant leftists of various stripes (e.g., Jacobins, Blanquists,

members of the International) and ruled under the red flag, there has been much debate over the extent to which it can legitimately be considered to have represented a specifically socialist revolution. The Communards' ability to engage in far-reaching social and economic reforms was severely hampered by the brevity of their reign as well as by the unrelenting pressures upon them to attend to the most immediate needs of conducting a civil war. Thus it is difficult to know how radically socialist the Commune would have been had it survived.¹⁹⁷ From the actions taken during their seventy-two days in power, however, it would seem that the Communards were motivated primarily

6.104

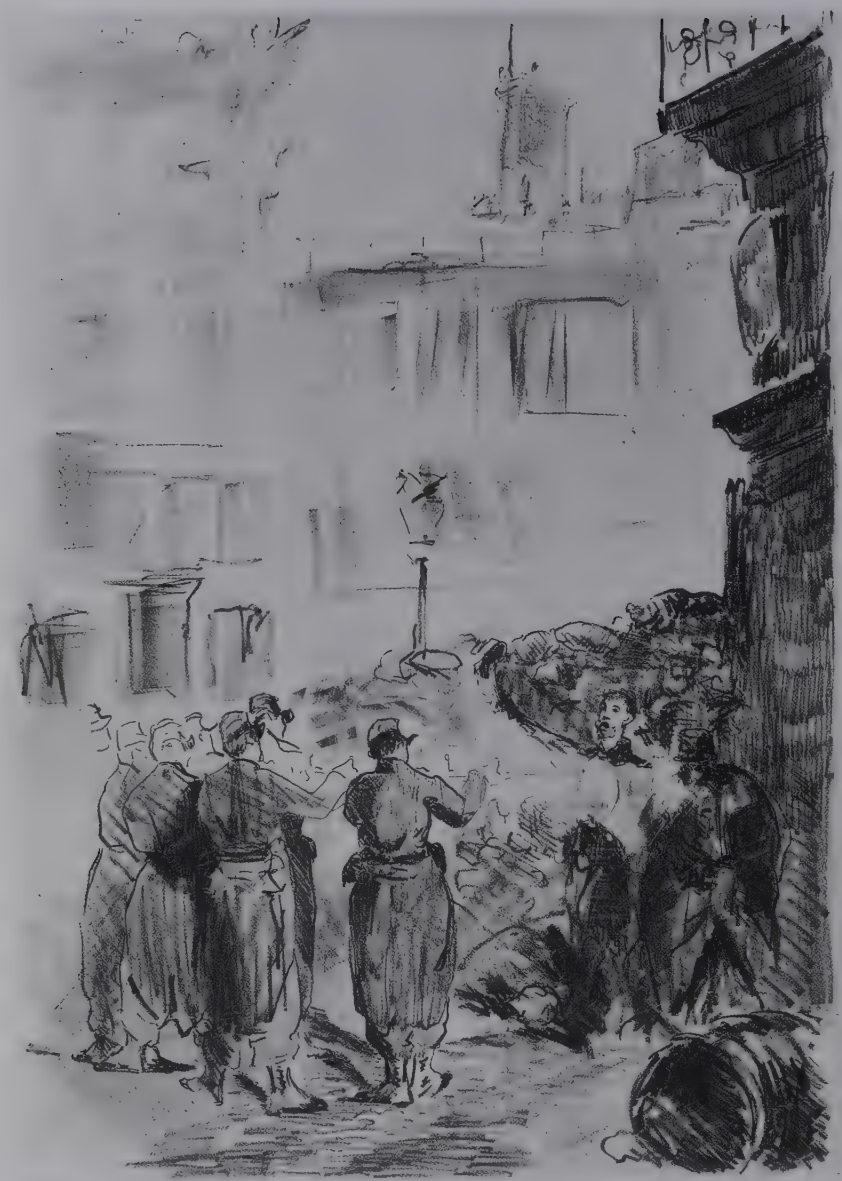
Charles Marville
(1816–1879)

Ruins of the Old Hôtel
de Ville, 1871

Photograph,
14⁹/₁₆ x 10⁵/₈ in.
(37 x 27 cm)

Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris





6.105

Edouard Manet
(1832–1883)

The Barricade, 1871
(published in 1884)

Lithograph,
18 3/8 x 13 1/8 in.
(46.5 x 33.4 cm)

Museum of Fine Arts,
Boston; gift of
W. G. Russell Allen

by the desire to preserve the national honor of France and to protect the Republic through a radical decentralization of political authority rather than to overhaul the social organization of the nation per se. Indeed, as is often pointed out, the only significant piece of social legislation passed under the Commune was a law banning night work for bakers.¹⁹⁸

While the Communards were busy organizing themselves in Paris, Thiers launched his murderous counterattack. Initial skirmishes between the army and Communard troops—generally referred to as the Versailles and the Fédérés respectively—took place on

April 2. Fighting between the two sides remained sporadic until May 21, when government troops, having bombarded the posh suburbs to the west of Paris, entered the city through the Porte de Saint-Cloud. The Versaillais then worked their way methodically across the city, reconquering the capital *quartier* by *quartier* until they reached the last pockets of resistance in the working-class districts in the third and fourth arrondissements. Appalling atrocities were committed on both sides: government troops indiscriminately slaughtered Communards and those they suspected of being sympathizers; the Communards retaliated by



murdering hostages loyal to the national cause, including the archbishop of Paris. As many as 20,000 may have been killed during the fighting from May 22 to 28—the notorious *semaine sanglante* (or “bloody week”)—making the final days of the Commune the most violent episode of civil unrest in Europe between the Reign of Terror and the Bolshevik revolution.¹⁹⁹

It was during the Commune that Paris underwent its most radical physical transformations. During the initial Prussian siege, the city had been spared widespread damage, as German bombardment had been largely confined to the extreme southern districts of

the city, with most of the shells falling harmlessly in the cemetery of Montparnasse. During the Commune, by contrast, the city suffered immeasurably, not only at the hands of the Versaillais but at those of the Communards as well.

A not insignificant portion of Commune destruction took the form of willful acts of iconoclasm carried out against monuments to previous regimes. Certainly the most notorious example of this type of ritualized destruction was the toppling of the Vendôme Column in May. Originally erected in 1810 in commemoration of Napoleon’s victory at Austerlitz, the column was the

6.106

*Remains of the
Barricade on the rue de
Rivoli, May 1871*

principal monument to Bonapartism in Paris. Calls for its destruction began to be heard immediately after the declaration of the Third Republic. On September 14, Gustave Courbet, acting as president of the newly established Commission des Arts, formally petitioned the Government of National Defense to dismantle—but not necessarily to destroy—the monument as an offense to the democratic and pacifist ideals of the Republic.²⁰⁰ After the establishment of the Commune in March, calls for the column's demolition redoubled until finally, on May 16—less than a week before Versaillais troops reentered the city—the monument was pulled down to the strains of “La Marseillaise” in an elaborate official ceremony. The event attracted scores of spectators, many of whom proceeded to collect fragments of the toppled monument as souvenirs;

others hired one of the many photographers on the scene to take their pictures before the rubble.²⁰¹

While many of the Communards busied themselves with the eradication of monuments to the nation's despotic past, others concentrated their efforts on protecting the besieged city from the onslaught that was sure to come in the future. Unfortunately for the Communards, these efforts proved too little too late. Only a small percentage of the vast coordinated system of barricades that was to be erected across the city as a last line of defense was in place when the Versaillais burst through the ramparts on May 21. Among the most impressive of these was an immense structure on the northeast corner of the place de la Concorde, running from Gabriel's elegantly neoclassical Naval Ministry to the retaining wall of the Tuileries Gardens. The



6.107

Théodore Ballu
(1817–1885) and
Edouard Deperthes
(1833–1898)

Salon des Arcades,
rebuilt 1872–82
Hôtel de Ville

designer of this structure was a fifty-year-old former shoemaker named Napoléon Gaillard who served as the Commune's chief barricade "engineer."

When the scattered defenses of the Communards failed to hold, the retreating forces took the drastic step of putting flames between themselves and the Versailles. Several of the city's most venerated structures fell victim to this desperate act, most notably the Tuileries Palace and the Hôtel de Ville. The firing of the Tuileries, which had served as the principle Parisian residence of French heads of state since its erection by Catherine de' Medici in the sixteenth century, was as much symbolic as strategic. In announcing his decision to torch the building on the night of May 23, the thirty-one-year-old commander Jules Bergeret noted with satisfaction that the "the last vestiges of Royalty have just vanished."²⁰²

Bergeret's fellow Communard Gustave Lefrançais likewise described himself as having "trembled with joy in seeing this sinister palace in flames, from where so often the order to massacre the people had been given and so many anti-social crimes had been planned and glorified."²⁰³

The destruction of the Hôtel de Ville by increasingly desperate Communards on the subsequent night of May 24 was, on the other hand, undertaken with a much heavier heart. It has even been suggested that the devastating psychological effect of the loss of this beloved icon of political radicalism on the last Communards defending the eastern sections of the city was greater than any benefits they derived from having the building's flames cover their retreat.²⁰⁴ Whatever the case, the firing of the Hôtel provided the most spectacular



6.108

Charles Marville
(1816-1879)

The Restoration of the
Vendôme Column,
Dec. 27, 1875

Photograph,
10¹³/₁₆ x 14³/₈ in.
(27.5 x 36.5 cm)
Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris



6.109
Ernest Meissonier
(1815–1891)
The Siege of Paris, 1870
Oil on canvas,
21 x 27¼ in.
(53.5 x 70.5 cm)
Musée du Louvre

pyrotechnic display of the insurrection. The poet Paul Verlaine was one of many Parisians prompted to record the “horribly beautiful” sight of the conflagration: “A thin column of black smoke came out of the campanile of the Hôtel-de-Ville; and, after two or three minutes at most, all the windows of the monument exploded, releasing enormous flames, and the roof fell in with an immense fountain of sparks. This fire lasted until the evening, and then assumed the form of a colossal brazier; this in its turn became, for days after, a gigantic smoldering ember.”²⁰⁵

With the cessation of the fighting on May 28, the repression began. In the National Assembly, Thiers

had promised that the “expiation” for the sins of the Commune would be complete, while down on the streets, the right-wing newspaper *Le Figaro* called for the purging of Paris of “the moral gangrene” that had been infecting it for the previous two decades. “What is a Republican?” the paper’s editor asked rhetorically—“A savage beast. . . . We must track them down in their lairs like wild animals.”²⁰⁶ The army, still smarting from its humiliating defeat at the hands of the Prussians, was only too willing to oblige. Thus, in the weeks immediately following the collapse of the Commune, gangs of marauding soldiers scoured the city in search of Communard fugitives, scores of whom were rounded



SIÈGE DE PARIS. — Figure de la Résistance, exécutée en neige par M. Falguière, le 9 décembre, au bas-relief 85. — Voir page 427.

up and executed on the spot (FIG. 6.105), while others—as many as 40,000—were arrested, with a quarter of these subsequently imprisoned or deported to the penal colony on New Caledonia. Thus it was not until the middle of June 1871 that the horrifying events of what Victor Hugo famously dubbed “l’année terrible”—the terrible year—finally began to subside.

When the smoke cleared, Paris lay in shambles. Not only had several of the capital’s most cherished monuments been reduced to smoldering ruins but much of the rest of the city, which only ten months earlier had been the most modern, glittering metropolis in Europe, resembled a sad war zone. Yet, far from lamenting the ruinous state of their city, many Parisians seem almost to have reveled in the sublimity of it all. Within days of the cessation of the fighting, promenading among the ruins had become all the rage among the reestablished bourgeoisie. Parisians were joined in this rather macabre ritual by foreigners who flooded into the city, particularly from across the channel, where an enterprising travel agent named Thomas Cook had begun booking tours of the devastated French capital.

The most significant aesthetic byproduct of this fascination with the architectural detritus of the

Commune was the development of a lively trade in photographs of the ruins.²⁰⁷ These range in quality and character from anonymous images of random acts of Commune destruction to views of the most celebrated ruins by established photographers such as Collard and Charles Marville (FIGS. 6.102 and 6.104). The appeal of these photographs was not simply a matter of satisfying the public’s morbid curiosity. As the art historian Alisa Luxembourg has most recently stressed, the ruins were also objects of profound aesthetic contemplation—at least for the city’s artistic elite. “With a feeling which will be reproached, but which any artist would forgive because he surely will also have experienced it, we were struck, above all, by the *beauty* of these ruins,” the prominent aesthete Théophile Gautier admitted in his memoirs.²⁰⁸

Despite the aesthetic appreciation of the ruins, there was a widespread sense of urgency, particularly within the government, to rebuild the capital, not only as a means of restoring a key portion of the economic and administrative infrastructure of France but also as a way of healing the deep psychic wounds that a humiliating foreign defeat and fractious civil war had left on the collective consciousness of the nation. Reconstruction



6.110 (above, left)

Burn Smeeton (active in Paris 1840–1860) after Henri-Félix Philippoteau (1815–1884)

View of Falguière Executing His Snow Sculpture of “La Résistance,” originally published in *L’Illustration*, December 3, 1870

Bibliothèque Nationale de France

6.111 (above)

Jean-Alexandre-Joseph Falguière (1831–1900)

La Résistance, first modeled 1870, this example probably 1894

Bronze, 23 x 15 3/4 x 11 3/4 in. (58.4 x 40 x 29.8 cm)
Los Angeles County Museum of Art; gift of Cantor Fitzgerald Art Foundation

6.112

Emmanuel Frémiet
(1824-1910)

Joan of Arc, 1872-74

Plaster,

30 x 18 ⁷/₁₆ x 8 ¹³/₁₆ in.

(75 x 46 x 22 cm)

Musée d'Orsay

was often complicated by politics, however. Thus the burned and gutted ruins of the Tuileries Palace stood untouched for twelve years while rival political factions debated what measures to take. Many conservatives wanted to preserve the ruins as a reminder of Communard "barbarism" and as a warning against would-be insurrectionists in the future. Liberals, who took control of the National Assembly at the end of the 1870s, managed to thwart these plans, and the last charred remains of the palace were finally pulled down in 1883.²⁰⁹

Many reactionaries called for the preservation of at least part of the ruins of the Hôtel de Ville as an

indictment of Communard vandalism as well, but the need for an operational city hall was far too urgent for even the most conservative authorities to contemplate seriously engaging in such a gratuitous act of political symbolism.²¹⁰ Thus in 1872, a public competition to rebuild the Hôtel de Ville was announced. The winning entry, by Théodore Ballu and Edouard Deperthes, entailed a rather free but respectful reconstruction of the original structure, only on a more spacious, monumental scale. The principle facade of the new building, which was inaugurated among much self-congratulation on the part of municipal authorities in 1882, mimicked



the decorative detailing of the seventeenth-century structure designed by Domenico da Cortona, called le Boccador, while the interior featured a suite of grandiose reception rooms, each richly appointed and lavishly decorated by the leading artists of the day (FIG. 6.107 and below, FIGS. 7.29, 7.31–7.33).

Certainly the most politically fraught restoration project undertaken in the aftermath of the Commune was that of the Vendôme Column. This expiatory act, which was completed in 1875 (FIG. 6.108), entailed the total undoing of one of the city's most controversial artistic personalities—Gustave Courbet.²¹¹ In August

1871 the painter was brought before the Third Council of War at Versailles on a number of charges, the most serious of which was having contributed to the destruction of a public monument. This accusation was not totally unfounded, for, as already noted, Courbet had petitioned the government to dismantle the column in September 1870. Seven months later, on April 27, 1871, he renewed his call, this time as an officially elected member of the Commune's governing council. Such grandstanding, so typical of Courbet, led to the widespread identification of the artist as the principal instigator of the whole affair—an association fully

6.113

Edouard Detaille
(1848–1912)

The Dream, 1888

Oil on canvas,
9 ft. 10¹/₈ in. x 13 ft. 1¹/₂ in.
(3 x 4 m)

Musée d'Orsay



attested to by the torrent of caricatures on the subject that appeared in both the pro- and anti-Communard press between 1871 and 1873.²¹² Such imagery all but assured Courbet's conviction; on September 2, 1871, the artist was sentenced to six months in prison and a 500-franc fine. This was only the beginning, however. In May 1873 the newly confirmed conservative majority in the National Assembly voted to charge the artist for part of the expenses of resurrecting the column, an idea that, somewhat ironically, may have been prompted by Courbet himself, who had boasted at the beginning of his trial that, should anyone be able to prove that he had been responsible for toppling the monument, then he would pay for its reconstruction himself.²¹³ In any event, on June 19, 1873, the minister of finance ordered the seizure of the contents of Courbet's studios in both Paris and Ornans, prompting the artist to flee to Switzerland, where he died, broken and in penury—and tirelessly proclaiming his innocence—on the last day of 1877.

Courbet was unique among the leaders of the artistic avant-garde in having played such a prominent role in the events of 1870–71, as other members of the Realist and burgeoning Impressionist schools kept decidedly low profiles throughout the conflict.²¹⁴ Of the major avant-garde artists who experienced at least part of the turmoil firsthand, only Manet attempted to respond to it pictorially. In the early 1870s he executed three prints, a rather lyrical etching representing women queueing up at a butcher shop during the siege and a pair of lithographs documenting the brutal suppression of the Commune. The more ambitious of the two lithographs (FIG. 6.105), which may relate to an unfulfilled project for a Salon painting,²¹⁵ represents the summary execution of two Communards by Versaillais troops before a barricade in the streets of Paris. Despite Manet's loose and sketchy handling, which imparts to the print the authority of directly observed, spontaneously recorded fact, it is doubtful that the artist, who seems to have returned to Paris only after the *semaine sanglante*, ever witnessed such a scene.²¹⁶

The government's crackdown on politically sensitive imagery in the early years of the Third Republic undoubtedly accounts for the paucity of artistic commemorations of the Commune. During the same period, the equally tragic but far less politically inflam-

matory subject of the Prussian siege became a favorite theme among artists. Among the most notable depictions of this event is Ernest Meissonier's rather histrionic *Siege of Paris* (FIG. 6.109).²¹⁷ This intensely patriotic artist, whose meticulously detailed (and at times politically ingratiating) historical genre scenes had made him the most commercially successful painter of the previous regime, had dutifully followed Napoleon III into battle at Metz in July. Disillusioned by the all-too-evident incompetence of France's military leadership, he returned to Paris, where he enlisted in the National Guard. After the siege, Meissonier retired to his suburban villa in Poissy only to find it occupied by the Prussians; it was then that he locked himself in his studio and began what he considered to be an act of artistic revenge on the invaders. Meissonier's unfinished canvas is centered upon a female personification of the city of Paris—a rather buxom, matronly version of the traditional “Marianne.” Dramatically silhouetted against a billowing *tricouleur*, she defiantly confronts the hideously emaciated figure of Famine, who, accompanied by a Prussian eagle, swoops down on the scene from upper left. The intoxicating reverie of revenge would become a lasting preoccupation of French literature and art, seen for example in the battle paintings of Meissonier's protégé, Edouard Detaille. His 1888 *The Dream* (FIG. 6.113) spins a fantasy of military glory from which France would eventually awaken in the mud and terror of World War I.

While the paintings of Meissonier and Detaille emphasize the bitter hardships and degradations of the war, other artists sought to put a more positive spin on the tragedy by concentrating on the defiance as opposed to the suffering of Paris during the siege. What was undoubtedly the most famous—and certainly the most fleeting—monument to this spirit of resistance was erected while Prussian forces still encircled the city. Following an early snowfall in December 1870, Alexandre Falguière, a much-decorated sculptor who, like so many of his fellow artists, had enlisted in the National Guard, decided to kill some time by building a colossal snow figure on the ramparts where he was stationed.²¹⁸ Falguière was assisted in this project by his equally bored and restless comrades, who brought the master mounds of snow that he then modeled over a makeshift armature of rubble and boards (FIG. 6.110).

The result, a massive nude snow woman seated defiantly atop a cannon, was a resounding success, not only with Falguière's fellow Guardsmen but with the entire population of Paris, so desperately in need of a boost in morale. No less an authority than Théophile Gautier declared the sculpture, which had been given the emblematic title "La Résistance," a masterpiece, while the "Parnassian" poet Théodore de Banville composed verses in its honor. Surprisingly, Falguière, who went on to become something of a specialist in the female nude, never translated this, his initial foray into the genre, into a more permanent monument. In addition to several contemporary prints, the appearance of the original sculpture is preserved today only through a series of small replicas executed by the artist at an undetermined date (FIG. 6.III).

Of course not all monuments to the Franco-Prussian War were as radically improvised as Falguière's snow woman. In fact, what was perhaps the most celebrated artistic manifestation of French nationalism during the immediate postwar period resulted from an official government commission. In December 1872 Emmanuel Frémiet, a relatively minor sculptor known almost exclusively for his anatomically exacting representations of animals, was charged with the execution of a monumental equestrian statue of Jeanne d'Arc. The commission was largely an act of charity orchestrated by well-placed friends of the artist, who, profoundly discouraged by lack of employment, was threatening to go into retirement.²¹⁹ As he had already begun contemplating the subject before actually receiving the commission, Frémiet was able to carry out the assignment in record time. A life-size cast of his composition in bronze (FIG. 6.II2) was inaugurated on February 20, 1874, on the place des Pyramides, a site that had been chosen because of its proximity to the locale where the heroine had been wounded during the battle to liberate Paris from the English in 1429.

As a native of the lost province of Lorraine as well as

a powerful icon of French resistance to foreign occupation, the figure of Jeanne d'Arc was bound to resonate in 1870s Paris. Frémiet further enhanced the political and emotional associations of the statue by representing the heroine in a resolutely militaristic—indeed almost menacing—guise. Clad in armor and hoisting the royal standard high above her head, the liberator stands erect in her stirrups, gazing defiantly toward enemy lines. Such a dramatically bellicose presentation was designed to salve the wounded pride of beleaguered Parisians by inviting them to take refuge from the humiliations of the present in the glories of the past and, more importantly perhaps, to whet their appetite for revenge—and not only against the Prussians. As has often been pointed out, the statue was oriented toward the ruins of the Tuileries Palace, thereby including the Communards as unseen enemies against whom Jeanne is about to deliver her wrath.

As was so often the case with public projects of the 1870s, the initial reception of Frémiet's sculpture was complicated by conflicting political allegiances. On the left, Republicans who might otherwise have been attracted to the intense patriotism of the monument were deeply disturbed by its no less emphatic religiosity; meanwhile on the right, die-hard Legitimists resented the appropriation of one of their most beloved heroines by the more moderate *royalistes tricolores* dominating the National Assembly.²²⁰ Eventually, however, public opinion rallied to Frémiet's sculpture, which over the course of the last two decades of the century, when devotion to the Maid of Orléans was at its peak, emerged as a veritable cult object. In fact, by 1890 the practice of placing wreaths and other forms of tribute at the foot of the statue had become so prevalent that one rich private citizen, disturbed by the resulting mess, offered to pay for the addition of six metal pegs to the base of the statue so that devotees might render their *hommages* in a more orderly fashion.²²¹

A RETURN TO “MORAL ORDER”

The conservative forces that came to power in the election of February 1871 remained firmly entrenched for most of the ensuing decade, despite signs of steady resurgence on the left.²²² In May 1873 Thiers, who had been elected president by the National Assembly two years earlier, was voted out of office by conservatives fearful of his inability to contain the liberal threat. His replacement was Maréchal MacMahon, a decorated war hero and ardent monarchist who had played a key role in the brutal suppression of the Commune and had thus emerged as the darling of the extreme right wing. As president, MacMahon operated under the collective thumb of a group of conservative aristocrats, led by the Orléanist duc de Broglie, who were essentially biding their time until the monarchy could be restored.

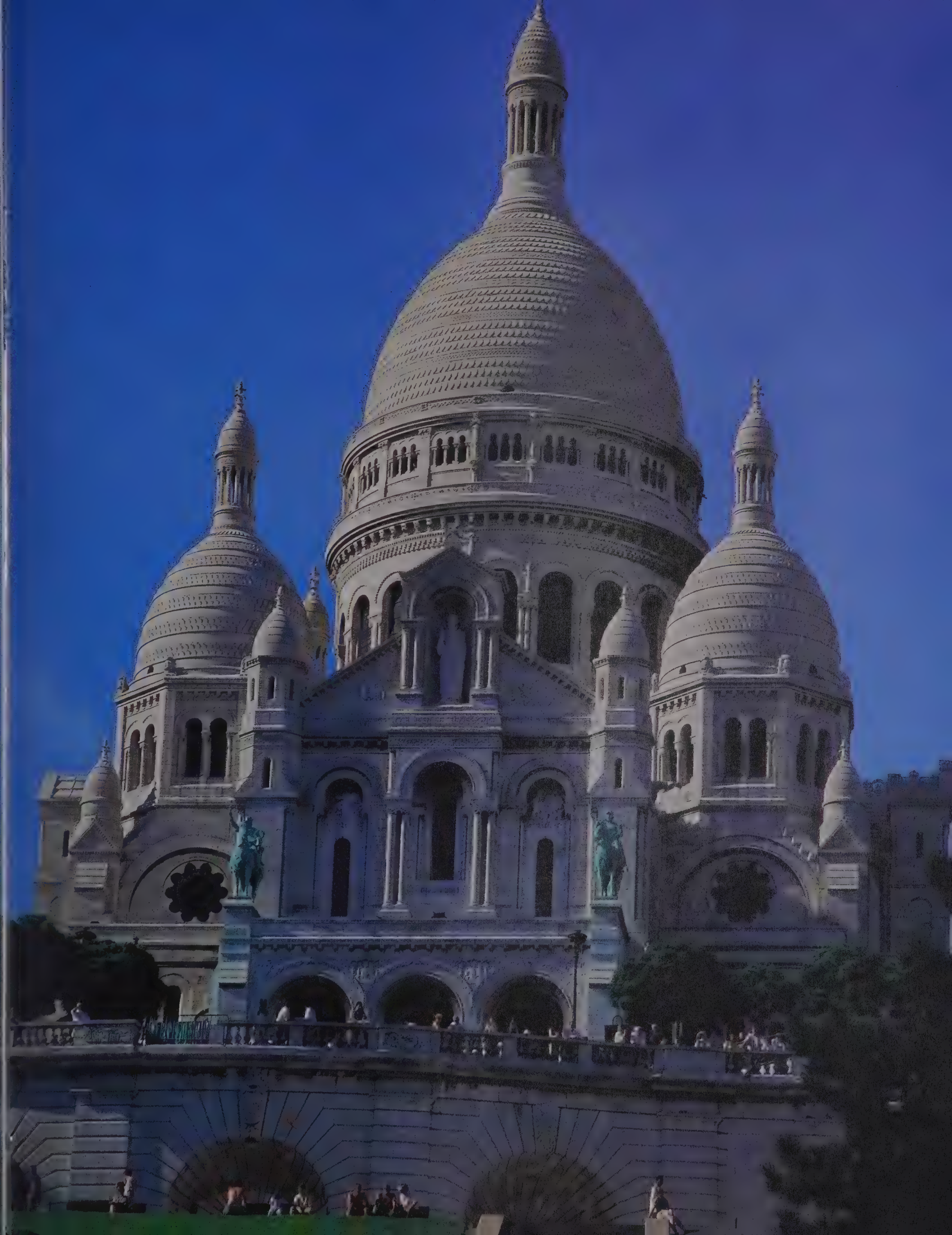
The reactionary designs of the new regime, which operated under the self-righteous banner of *l'ordre morale*, were made immediately clear by one of the rare architectural initiatives of any real significance carried out in Paris during the early years of the Third Republic.²²³ On July 24, 1873, the National Assembly voted to take up the vow that had been made during the Franco-Prussian War by a group of influential churchmen to erect a monument in atonement for the decadence and self-indulgence of the *fête impériale*—sins for which these gentlemen saw the disastrous events of 1870–71 as divine retribution. The result was one of Paris's most famous structures—the Eglise du Vœu National au Sacré-Cœur, the massive silhouette of which continues to loom large over the city from the heights of Montmartre (FIG. 6.114).²²⁴ The choice of this particular location was due not only to its imminent visibility but also to its having been a stronghold of the insurgents of 1871; thus, the sins of the Commune were targeted by this national act of expiation as well. Although the competition for the design of the church was launched in 1873 and the cornerstone laid by the archbishop in Paris two years later, construction of the hugely controversial monument—secularists and Republicans were, of course, violently opposed to the project—stretched into the opening decades of the twentieth century. It was not, in fact, until 1918, as France was savoring her revenge for 1870–71 with the devastating defeat of Germany in World War I, that the structure was finally consecrated.

While President MacMahon and his supporters were busy trying to reestablish the twin authorities of throne and altar, Republicans were steadily gaining ground in the legislature, finally capturing a majority in the Chambre des Députés in the by-elections of March 1876. MacMahon responded to this setback by dissolving the Assembly and calling for general elections the following year. The liberal majority was confirmed, however, thereby ensuring the survival of the Republican regime. This triumph was celebrated the following year with the opening of a rather hastily arranged Exposition Universelle on May 1 as well as an even more overtly partisan *fête de la République*, whose *tricolore*-draped festivities (FIG. 6.116) took place on June 30; this was the first such national holiday declared in France since the collapse of the Empire.

The last years of the 1870s saw a series of highly significant political and symbolic victories that effectively ended the so-called moral-order regime. In the elections of 1879, Republicans captured a majority in the Senate as well as the Chambre, forcing the resignation of MacMahon, who was replaced by Jules Grévy, the first truly Republican president of the Third Republic. It was also in 1879 that the government returned to Paris from Versailles, selected July 14 (Bastille Day) as the national holiday, and adopted the formerly outlawed Republican fight song, “La Marseillaise,” as the national anthem. Finally and most tellingly with regard to the leftward drift of political opinion during these years, a series of measures extending full amnesty to exiled Communards passed the Assembly over the course of 1879–80. The liberal ascendancy signalled by all of these events was represented most poignantly by the looming silhouette of Auguste Bartholdi's sculpture *Liberty Lighting the World* (FIG. 6.115), marking time in Paris prior to her installation in New York Harbor.

Prior to this leftward turn of events, the early years of the Third Republic witnessed a concerted attempt to extend the reactionary *ordre morale* into the realm of the visual arts. The stern tone of this movement was perfectly encapsulated in the proclamation issued by the critic and historian Henri Delaborde, soon to be the *secrétaire perpétuel* of the resurgent Académie des Beaux-Arts, on the occasion of the 1872 Salon, the first of the new Republic. Delaborde called for a return to academic orthodoxy, insisting that art should edify the

6.114 (opposite)
Paul Abadie (1812–1884)
et al.
Basilica of Sacré-Cœur,
1874–1914



mind and elevate the spirit instead of simply stimulating the senses. Entailed in this return to an explicitly didactic, moralizing art was the reassertion of the traditional hierarchy of genres, according to which history and religious painting—preferably in the form of monumental wall decoration—would be promoted over all the other “frivolous” categories of art making, such as portraiture, genre, and landscape.

This effort to reestablish the moral authority of monumental history and religious painting manifested itself most dramatically in a massive decorative campaign aimed at many of the most prestigious public buildings in Paris.²²⁵ This campaign was launched in 1874 by Charles-Philippe de Chennevières, the newly appointed director of fine arts, with an ambitious proposal for the decoration of the church of Saint-Geneviève. Wanting to reassert the religious status of this much-contested structure, Chennevières, a confirmed Legitimist, proposed a cycle of paintings commemorating what he pointedly referred to as “the marvelous history of the

Christian origins of France.”²²⁶ Such a scheme could not have been more thoroughly attuned to the ideological agenda of *l'ordre morale*, and thus funds were immediately allocated for the project. The individual components of the massive decoration, which recount key episodes in the lives of France’s most beloved religious and royal figures—Saint Denis, Clovis, Jeanne d’Arc, Saint Louis, and of course, Saint Geneviève—were then distributed among twelve of the nation’s most eminent painters. The resulting murals, carried out over the course of the succeeding two and a half decades, constitute an impressive if decidedly eclectic ensemble, one that runs the gamut of officially sanctioned styles, from the bloodless classicism of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes to the vulgarly sensationalist, eye-popping illusionism of Léon Bonnat (FIG. 6.117).

While the administration sought to breathe life back into the moribund tradition of monumental decorative painting at the Pantheon, the attention of the vast majority of artists remained focused on what had been the chief arena of artistic production and consumption in France for well over a century—the Salon. In the very last year of the Empire, artists had finally gained what many regarded as their most fundamental right as practicing professionals—the prerogative to elect the membership of the admissions jury of the official exhibition.²²⁷ In 1872 this privilege was revoked, as Charles Blanc, the Republic’s first director of fine arts, announced that three-fourths of the jury would be selected by an electorate consisting exclusively of academicians and/or officially decorated artists, while the remaining quarter would be appointed by the administration. The result of this reform, as Blanc surely intended, was a sharp reduction in the number of works admitted to the exhibition and a concomitant rise in the quantity of *refusés*, whereas over 5,400 works had been exhibited in 1870, just over 2,000 items were on display in 1872.²²⁸

This initiative elicited the inevitable outcry from artists, who protested the severity of the jury by calling for a Salon des Refusés—a demand that was granted in 1873, 1875, and 1876. Several months earlier another group of dissidents—including such luminaries as Corot, Daubigny, Honoré Daumier, and Manet—had responded to the government’s assault on the so-called lesser genres with a petition addressed directly to the



6.115

Victor Bargaud

Statue of Liberty Rising
in Paris, c. 1879

Musée Carnavalet



6.116

Claude Monet
(1840-1926)

*Rue Saint-Denis,
30th of June, 1878*

Oil on canvas,
30⁷/₁₆ x 20¹³/₁₆ in.
(76 x 52 cm)

Musée des Beaux-Arts,
Rouen

president of the Republic asserting the greatness and originality of the nation's landscape and genre painters.²²⁹ Thus it would appear that the contemporary French school continued to be mired in the same kinds of controversies that had plagued it for most of the nineteenth century—controversies pitting an elite coterie of institutionally entrenched painters and sculptors and their bureaucratic supporters against the vast majority of artists who either could not or would not produce in accordance with the official aesthetic.

This continued polarization of the Parisian art world in the 1870s is poignantly demonstrated by the contrasting fates of two sculptures that figured prominently in the Salons of that decade: Antonin Mercier's *David* (FIG. 6.118) and Auguste Rodin's *Age of Bronze* (FIG. 6.119). Throughout the nineteenth century, sculpture had played a decidedly subordinate role to painting in France. During the first half of the century, when the Salon was housed in the Louvre, sculpture had been displayed in the dark and dingy galleries on the first floor of the palace, attracting few visitors and even fewer critics, who typically tacked their brief remarks on sculpture onto the end of their reviews. Indeed, the general feeling about the medium throughout most of the century was perfectly encapsulated in one of the section headings of Baudelaire's famous review of the 1846 Salon—"Why sculpture is a bore."²³⁰

During the Second Empire, the status of sculpture began to rise, as the extensive decorative and propagandistic needs of Napoleon III brought to the fore talented and original masters such as Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux (see FIG. 6.36). The transfer in 1857 of the Salon to the Palais de l'Industrie, the cavernous exhibition hall that had been erected for the 1855 Exposition Universelle, further enhanced the visibility of sculpture, as works in this medium were now displayed among the decorative plantings and benches of the commodious central atrium of the gleaming new structure (FIG. 6.120).²³¹

Mercier's statue of David was modeled while the artist, who had captured the coveted Prix de Rome in 1868, was still a *pensionnaire* at the Villa Medici.²³² The young artist thereby had the full authority of the Academy behind him when he submitted the plaster cast to the 1872 Salon. And indeed, *David* exemplifies everything the academicians were looking for in a work of art: an emphatically idealized male nude reenacting

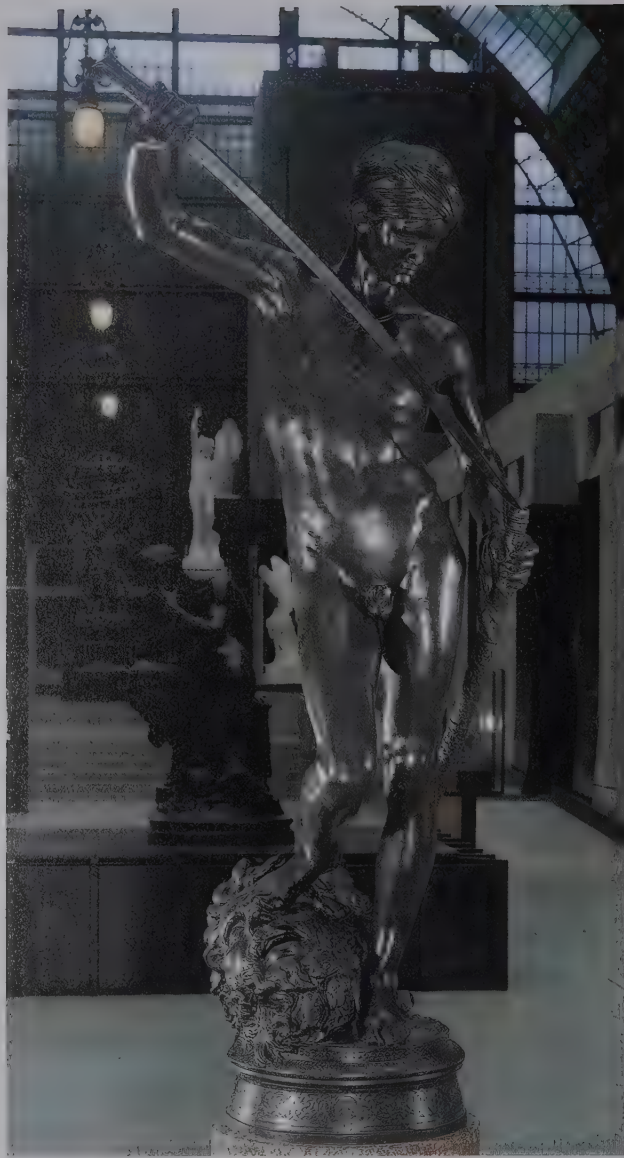
a heroic episode from a hallowed literary source; archaeological verisimilitude in the exoticizing details of the turban and long slender scabbard and sword; art historical self-consciousness in the languorous pose and slight, attenuated proportions of the figure—features that Mercier borrowed directly from the famous statue of the same subject by Donatello. Such systematic adherence to the academic party line paid huge dividends for the artist; not only was his *David* awarded a first-class medal at the close of the Salon, but the following year Mercier was presented with the cross of the Légion d'Honneur, becoming the first artist in history to be so honored while serving out his *pensionnat* in Rome.

The reception accorded Rodin's less conventional *Age of Bronze* at the 1877 Salon could hardly have been more different.²³³ Rodin, who had been denied admission to the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, lacked the academic credentials that had contributed so crucially to Mercier's success. After learning the rudiments of his craft at the Ecole Gratuite de Dessin—the so-called Petit Ecole dedicated to the training of working-class children of Paris in the applied arts²³⁴—Rodin worked as an assistant in the studio of Albert-Ernest Carrier-Belleuse, one of the most important decorative sculptors of the Second Empire. The artist then served briefly in the National Guard during the Franco-Prussian War before moving to Brussels in 1871, where he established a reputation as both a monumental and a commercial sculptor.

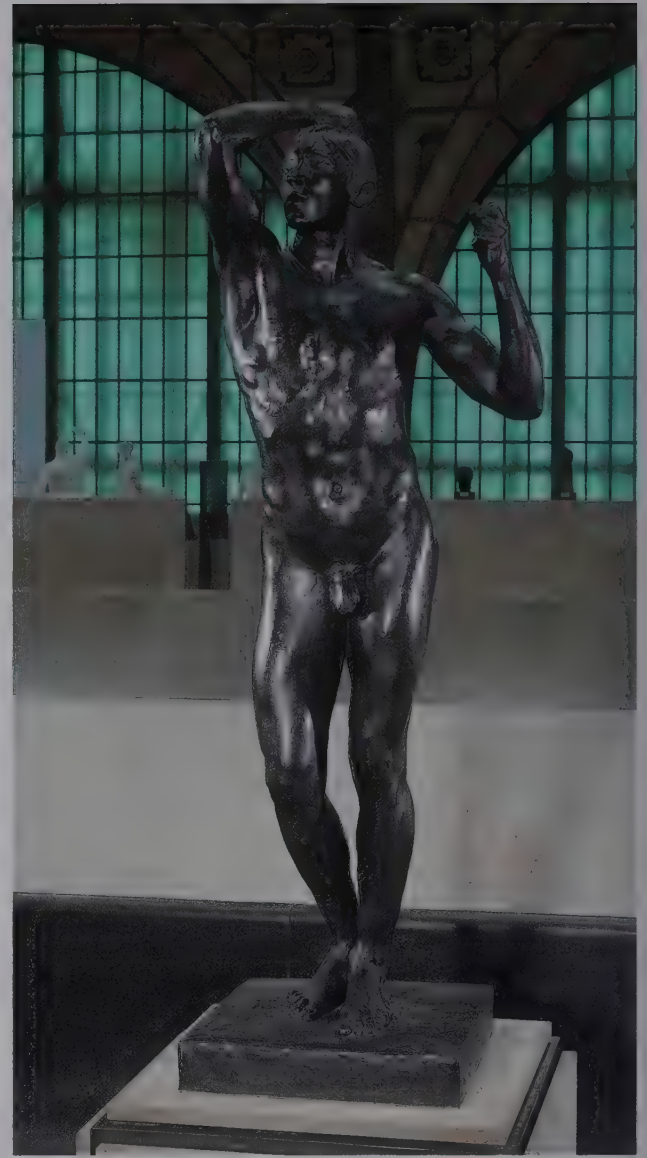
The Age of Bronze was the first work Rodin managed to exhibit in the Parisian Salon (a previous submission had been rejected in 1864). A cast of the work had been exhibited earlier in 1877 in Brussels under the title *Le Vaincu* (The vanquished one), suggesting that Rodin may have initially intended it to serve as yet another memorial to France's defeat in the Franco-Prussian War. The artist eventually rejected these overly topical connotations, however, adopting instead the more general allegorical title *Age of Bronze*, a reference to the transitional phase in the traditional tripartite division of human history—that which separates the utopian Age of Gold from the war-torn Age of Iron. It was man's awakening to the enduring tragedy of pain and suffering that Rodin wanted to evoke in this sculpture, a feat he managed with nothing more than the expressive manipulation of the human body, utterly devoid of conventional attributes or props.²³⁵

6.117 (opposite)
Léon-Joseph-Florentin
Bonnat (1833-1922)
*The Martyrdom of
Saint Denis*, Salon of
1885
Oil on canvas
Panthéon





6.118 (above)
Antonin Mercier
(1845–1916)
David, 1872
Bronze,
72 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 30 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 32 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(184 x 76.8 x 83.2 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



6.119 (above, right)
Auguste Rodin
(1840–1917)
The Age of Bronze, 1877
Bronze,
71 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 23 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 24 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.
(178 x 59 x 61.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

It was perhaps the sheer simplicity of Rodin's final conception that focused attention on what would prove to be the most controversial aspect of the sculpture—its unfaltering anatomical exactitude. Indeed, many critics found the realism of the work so astounding that they accused the artist of having based it directly on a life cast. Rodin vehemently denied these rumors, which had begun to circulate when the work was first exhibited in Brussels, going so far as to provide the jury of the Salon with photographs of the model who had posed for him as proof of the all-important gap that separated his art from life. These measures were to no avail; the government refused to order a bronze cast of the statue on the grounds that it was too closely dependent on the life cast. In the end, however, the controversy over the *Age of Bronze* probably did more to help than hinder Rodin's career by establishing him as a formidable—
; if controversial—force to be reckoned with. And indeed,

three years later, when the sculpture was reexhibited at the 1880 Salon, Rodin was finally able to convince the administration to order a bronze cast of the statue, which was set up in the Luxembourg Gardens in 1884.

The underlying tensions and conflicts that informed the contrasting experiences of Mercier and Rodin at the Salon came to a head at the end of the 1870s when the Republican government of Jules Grèvy took over and attempted to liberalize the official arts policy. In a speech given at the awards ceremony of the 1879 Salon, Jules Ferry, the newly appointed minister of public instruction, denounced the despotism of the Academy and proclaimed the promotion of freedom and individualism as the goals of the new administration.²³⁶ These words were translated into action by way of yet another reform of the Salon jury, the electorate for which was again expanded to all artists who had participated in at least three previous exhibitions. This liberalized jury



resulted in an overwhelming rise in the number of works accepted at the 1880 Salon: 7,289, almost 1,400 more than at the exhibition of 1879, which had been the largest Salon to date. Yet instead of ameliorating the factionalism within the contemporary art world, the liberalizing reforms introduced by Ferry and Edmond Turquet, his undersecretary in charge of the fine arts, only exacerbated the situation, dividing the artistic population into ever-more-polarized groups of cultural conservatives intent on reestablishing the Grand Tradition and the artistic rank and file who simply wanted to make a living from their art. Recognizing the impossibility of mediating between these two extremes—"You are absolutely ungovernable," an exasperated Ferry complained to an assembly of artists in 1879²³⁷—the administration eventually took the radical step of abandoning the two-hundred-year-old tradition of official sponsorship of the Salon. On January 17, 1880,

Turquet announced that the responsibility for organizing the annual exhibitions was being transferred to a ninety-member committee of artists that the administration had previously convened to advise it on artistic affairs. The administration meanwhile reserved the right to hold special triennial exhibitions of works it deemed the most outstanding artistic productions of the day. Only one of these official exhibitions was ever staged, in 1883.²³⁸ The annual Salons continued to be organized under the auspices of a group calling itself the Société des Artistes Françaises but was soon encountering stiff competition from a variety of alternative exhibitions staged by rival societies, both conventional and avant-garde. Thus, by the end of the 1880s the Salon in its traditional guise as the single most important venue for the display of contemporary works of art in all of Europe had virtually ceased to exist.

6.120

Charles Marville
(1816–1879)

Palais de l'Industrie,
Sculpture Hall, 1878

Bibliothèque Historique
de la Ville de Paris

W O R L D L Y W O M E N

The expiatory atmosphere established in early Third Republic Paris by those eager to atone for the sins of the *fête impériale*, on the one hand, and of the Commune, on the other, refocused attention on a figure that, since the middle of the century, had served as one of the principal icons of both the seductions and corruptions of the modern city—the prostitute.²³⁹ By 1870 this proverbially age-old profession had evolved into an extremely complex, multifaceted affair, one that, for many social and moral reformers at least, threatened to infiltrate every aspect of public life. And indeed, prostitution was nothing if not ubiquitous in the late nineteenth century. The profession's elite—the celebrated *grandes horizontales* who held sway over many of the most elevated social circles of the Second Empire (see above, p. 911)—continued to flaunt their lavish lifestyles along the newly restored boulevards of 1870s Paris. Meanwhile, at the opposite end of the social spectrum, desperately impoverished streetwalkers, many aged and syphilitic, plied their trade in the dark and fetid corners of the working-class districts of the city, frequently offering themselves up to drunken day laborers and off-duty soldiers for as little as a few sous. Significantly, it was neither the ostentation of the triumphant demi-mondaine nor the wretchedness of the common street whore that most perturbed proponents of *l'ordre morale*, but rather the less readily identifiable brand of prostitute who fell in between these two extremes: “working girls”—such as sales clerks, milliners, laundresses, waitresses, and barmaids, who, without devoting themselves exclusively to a life of prostitution, were nevertheless open to the occasional sexual transaction as a means of making ends meet or, more ominously still, of elevating their social position.

The obsession with prostitution in the early years of the Third Republic is nowhere more piquantly demonstrated than in the popularity of the theme with writers and artists, particularly of the avant-garde.²⁴⁰ In the course of a few short years, from 1876 to 1881, four of the century's most celebrated literary treatments of the theme appeared: Joris-Karl Huysmans's *Marthe, histoire d'une fille* (1876), Edmond de Goncourt's *La Fille Elisa* (1877), Zola's *Nana* (1880), and Guy de Maupassant's “La Maison Tellier” (1881).²⁴¹ At precisely the same moment, several of the leading avant-garde

painters took up the subject as well. In 1877, for instance, Manet, creator of that most notorious of all painted prostitutes—*Olympia* (see FIG. 6.41)—returned to the theme in a decidedly more lighthearted but hardly less scandalous image of a scantily clad courtesan at her toilette (FIG. 6.121). In what can only be considered a willful act of provocation, Manet entitled his painting *Nana* in homage to Zola's infamous heroine of the same name.²⁴² This allusion to the controversial naturalist writer, together with the picture's loose and sketchy “Impressionist” execution, was enough to ensure its rejection from the 1877 Salon. Undaunted, Manet arranged to have his large and ambitious work displayed in the window of a picture shop on the fashionable boulevard des Capucines, where it predictably created a sensation.

Manet's painting offers a striking contrast to the constant hand-wringing that had come to dominate the official discourse on prostitution at this time. The artist positively revels in the success of this attractive, good-humored courtesan. With a lipstick delicately poised in one hand and a powder puff dangling from the other, *Nana* (whom Manet modeled on the beautiful young actress Henriette Hauser) temporarily suspends her toilette in order to cast a wry and knowing glance at the viewer, while her “escort” for the evening waits patiently on the settee at right. It is ironic delight in the courtesan's effortless subjugation of such a paragon of bourgeois respectability that provides the major thrust of Manet's picture, every element of which—from *Nana*'s affectedly extended little finger and impudent, swaybacked pose to the array of expensive furnishings crowding her boudoir—testifies to the power and confidence of the enterprising *femme galante*. And lest the viewer be tempted to lament such ill-gotten gains, the formal language of the picture sustains the joke. The dominant light, “blond” tonality imparts a bright, optimistic mood to the scene, as do such witty details as the irreverent cropping of the client by the picture's right edge and the playful manner in which the elaborate curves and countercurves of the neo-rococo sofa echo the equally voluptuous contours of *Nana*'s undulating form.²⁴³

Although Manet would never again confront the theme of prostitution so directly, many of his late productions are populated with the very sorts of publicly employed *parisiennes* who were customarily suspected

6.121 (opposite)

Edouard Manet

(1832–1883)

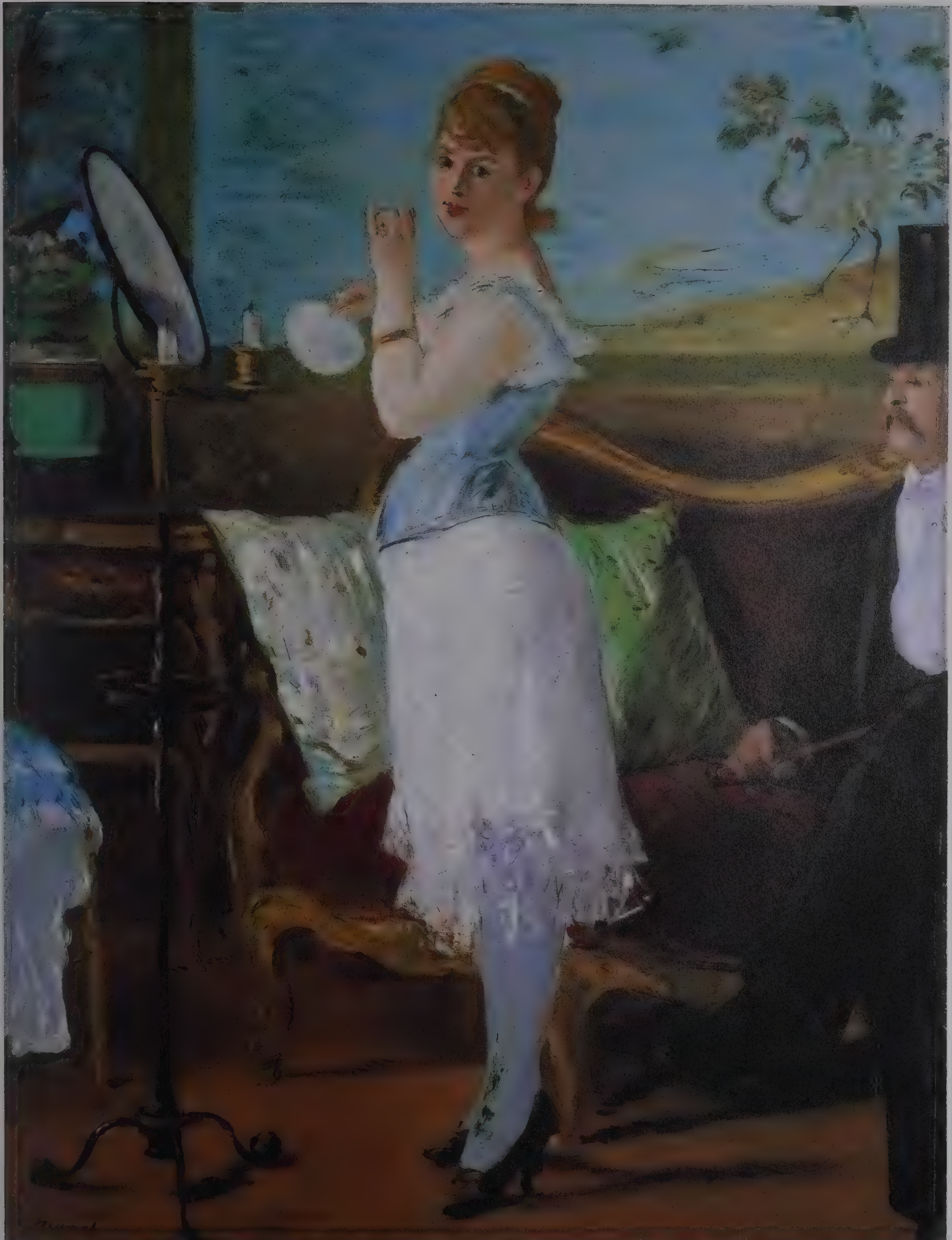
Nana, 1877

Oil on canvas.

61 x 45¼ in.

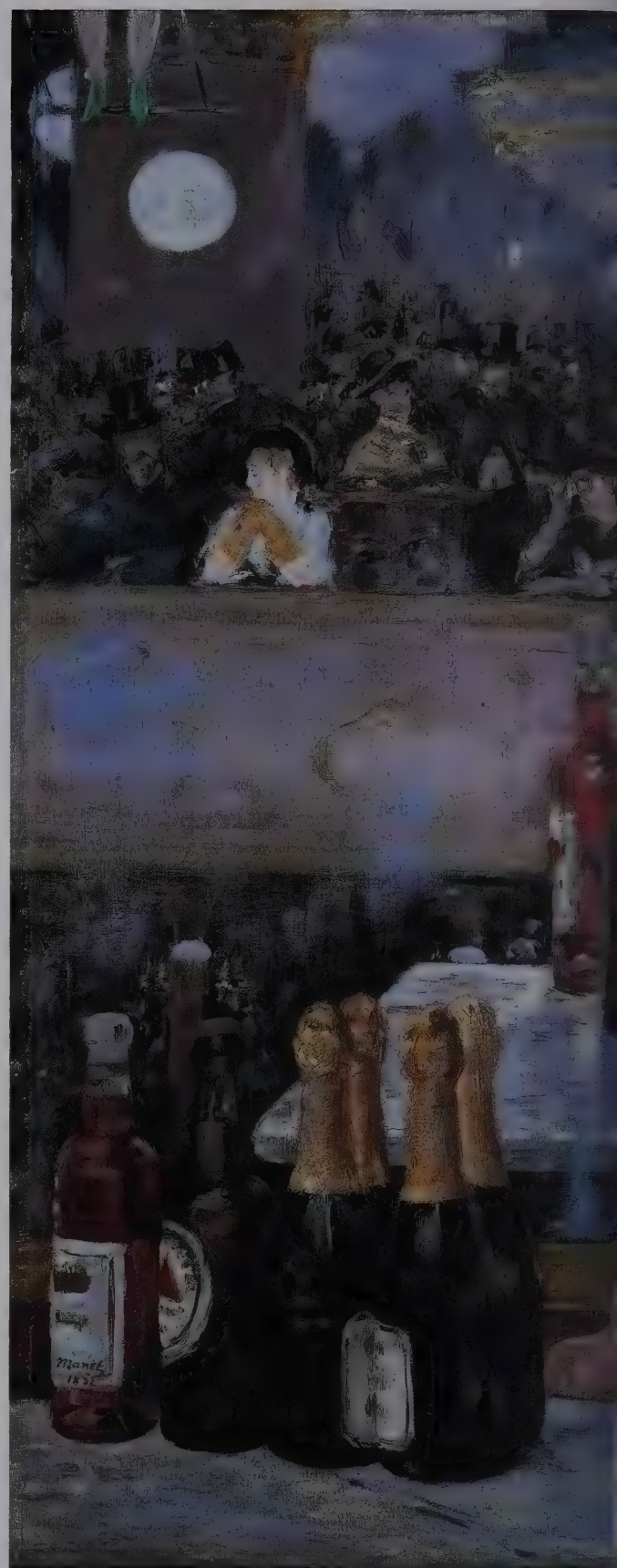
(155 x 115 cm)

Kunsthalle, Hamburg



of selling themselves on the side: unchaperoned denizens of bars and cafés (*The Plum*, 1878, National Gallery of Art, Washington), shop workers (*The Milliner*, 1881, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco), waitresses, and barmaids (*Corner in a Café Concert*, 1878, National Gallery, London). The artist's engagement with this type of subject matter culminated in 1882 with the completion of one of his most celebrated works, the *Bar at the Folies-Bergère* (FIG. 6.122). In contrast to the joking irreverence of *Nana*, this picture, which was exhibited at the 1882 Salon, exudes a melancholic air strangely out of step with the boisterous atmosphere of the Folies-Bergère, one of the largest and most popular café-concerts in Paris. Manet positions us before a bar on the balcony of the horseshoe-shaped auditorium of this cavernous establishment, the only allusion to the elaborate floor show being the whimsical detail of the legs of a trapeze artist projecting into the upper left-hand corner of the painting. The picture's otherwise staid—indeed almost classical—composition is dominated by the monumental figure of the blonde *verseuse* or “pourer,” an attractive young barmaid named Suzon,²⁴⁴ whose symmetrically outstretched arms form a perfect pyramid in the exact center of the canvas. Displayed atop the marble counter on which this figure leans is an array of libations as well as a bowl of mandarin oranges and a pair of roses stuck into the makeshift vase of a glass. Manet's masterful execution evokes the texture of each and every item in this elaborate still life—the loose dimpled peels of the oranges, the crystalline hardness of the cut-glass compote, the crinkled foil of the bottles of champagne—without, however, betraying the fundamental properties of his medium. The paint remains visible as paint throughout the image—loose and fluid in some areas, dry and scumbled in others. The result is one of the great glories of French still life.

The enduring fascination of this painting lies primarily in the inscrutability of its heroine. Like Victorine Meurent in such masterpieces of the 1860s as *Luncheon on the Grass* (FIG. 6.38), Suzon stares directly out of the canvas. In contrast to the aggressive, at times even disdainful expression of Victorine, however, the barmaid's mien is laced with a note of resigned disillusionment. She does not actually return our gaze but glances wearily past us to the left. This disengaged and remote,



6.122

Edouard Manet
(1832–1883)

*A Bar at the
Folies-Bergère*, 1881–82

Oil on canvas,
38 $\frac{1}{6}$ x 52 in.
(96 x 130 cm)

The Courtauld Gallery,
London



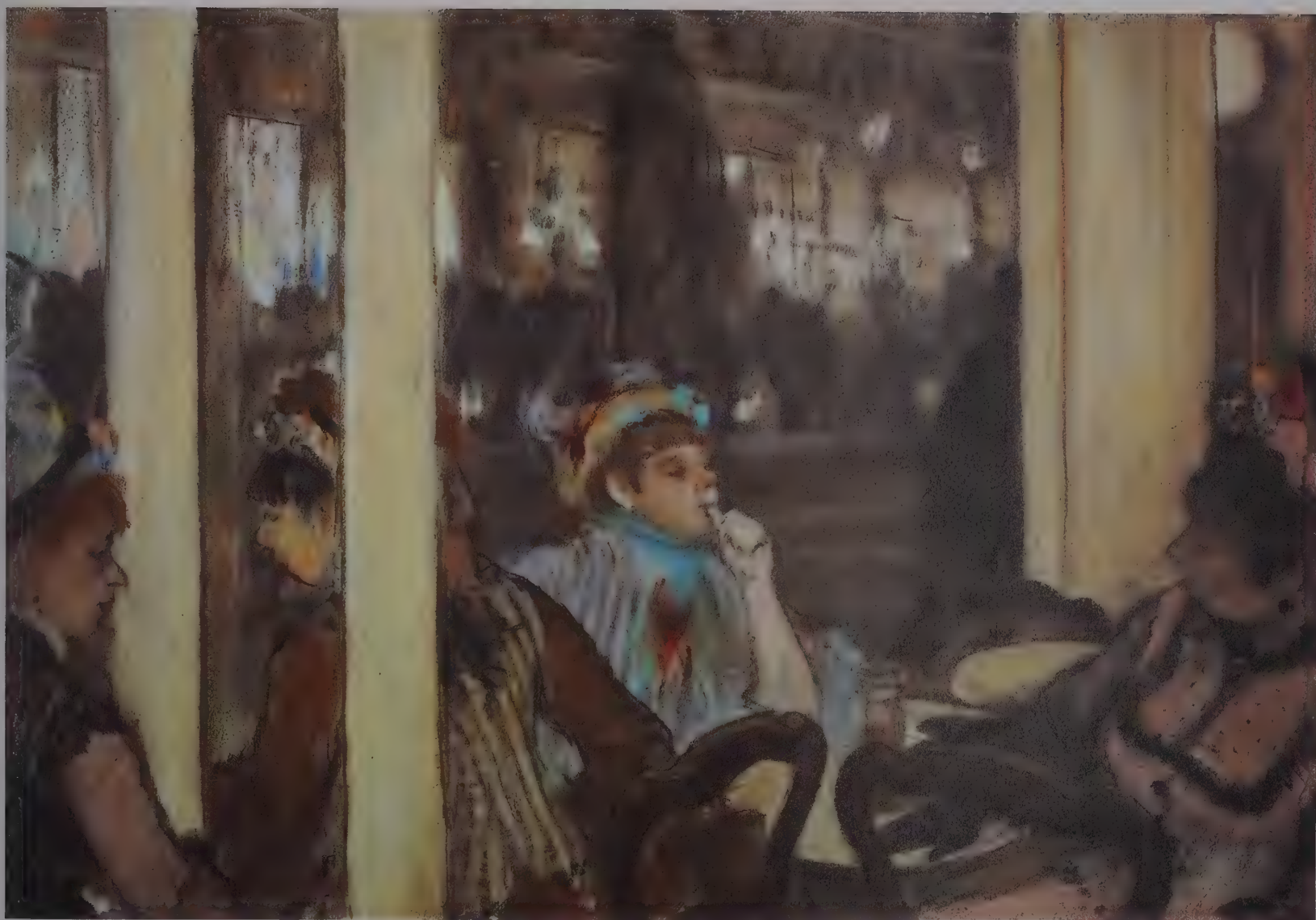


6.123

Edgar Degas
(1834–1917)

*In a Café (The Absinthe
Drinker)*, 1875–76

Oil on canvas,
36¹/₆ x 27¹/₄ in.
(92 x 68 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



melancholic demeanor is rendered all the more troubling by what is undoubtedly the picture's most celebrated detail—the reflection of the barmaid's back in the vast mirror that forms the rear plane of the picture. Here Suzon no longer seems to stand bolt upright, staring blankly into space, but leans compliantly forward in order to assist a male customer. It is the instability of this image, as epitomized by this subtle but unmistakable discrepancy between Suzon and her reflection, that has puzzled critics and historians ever since the picture's debut in 1882.²⁴⁵

Although Manet certainly did not shrink from contemplating the less savory aspects of the world in which

he lived, his pictures never descend into the darkly cynical or morose. The same cannot be said of the other major artistic chronicler of the Parisian demimonde during the early Third Republic: Edgar Degas. Unlike Manet, the consummate dandy and charming bon vivant, Degas was a notorious misanthrope who cast a jaundiced eye on his fellow Parisians. Consider, for instance, *In a Café (The Absinthe Drinker)* (FIG. 6.123), a painting from 1876 that constitutes one of the artist's most pessimistic commentaries on modern life. Represented are a couple of barflies slouched in a corner of the Nouvelle-Athènes, a café on the place Pigalle where members of Degas's own social circle of avant-garde

6.124

Edgar Degas (1834-1917)

*Women on the
Terrace of a Café in
the Evening*, 1877

Pastel on paper,
21½ x 28⅞ in.
(54.5 x 71.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

6.125

Edgar Degas
(1834–1917)

*The Name Day of the
Madame*, 1876–77

Pastel over monotype,
10½ x 11¼ in.

(26.6 x 29.6 cm)

Musée Picasso

artists and writers regularly gathered.²⁴⁶ The picture is centered upon a frumpily dressed, disheveled woman planted before an eerily glowing glass of absinthe, the extremely addictive drink that became the libation of choice among the Parisian working class because of its extraordinary potency and relatively low cost.²⁴⁷ The soft, even illumination of the scene suggests that it is morning; thus, it is not a casual social drinker that we encounter in this picture but a desperate addict getting her first fix of the day.²⁴⁸ Everything about the figure suggests alcoholic degeneration—her heavy-lidded, unfocused stare; the weary slump of her narrow, wasted shoulders; the indecorous splay of her ridicu-

lously pomped feet. This slattern, who was modeled by the actress Ellen André, shares a table with an equally woolly and unkempt man, whom Degas based on the artist Marcellin Desboutin. Unlike his companion, however, this figure maintains control of his mental and motor skills. The tall brown drink at his elbow has been identified as a *mazagran*, a concoction made out of coffee and seltzer water that was a popular remedy for hangovers.²⁴⁹ Its presence here suggests that Desboutin is attempting to emerge out of his drunken stupor while his companion is intent on perpetuating hers.

Degas continued what would be his extended, indeed almost obsessive, engagement with the theme



of prostitution the very next year when he completed a pastelized monotype—a kind of print in which the ink is applied directly onto the engraver's plate without any incising—entitled *Women on the Terrace of a Café in the Evening* (FIG. 6.124). Less morose than *The Absinthe Drinker*, this work is informed by the kind of caustic humor that would become the other major chord struck by Degas's images of the fallen woman. Represented is a quartet of prostitutes—easily identifiable by their tasteless, gaudy attire—who chat idly with one another while displaying themselves to potential clients on a sidewalk café of the boulevard Montmartre, a notorious center of clandestine prostitution. In the middle of the sheet, a woman sporting a blue-striped dress and an excessively frilly hat presses her thumb to her front teeth in a gesture that has been interpreted as a comment on the miserliness of her night's clientele—"not even that!"²⁵⁰ The woman across the table listens distractedly to her companion's complaint while their two colleagues at left shift in their seats. It has been suggested that the woman in brown is rising to follow the shadowy figure of a man seen scurrying away into the gaslit distance at right.²⁵¹

With this image Degas descends from realism into social satire. Its caricatural aspect is most clearly evident in the faces of the prostitutes, who share a common set of physical traits recognized at the time as signs of mental and moral degeneration: low sloping foreheads and prominent porcine snouts combined with receding chins and full cheeks.²⁵² This caricatural impulse plays an even greater role in what is undoubtedly the most extraordinary product of Degas's ongoing interest in the theme of prostitution: a series of over fifty monotypes chronicling life in a *maison clos*.²⁵³ Many of these are invested with an overtly comical, almost burlesque air. Rarely, however, is this note of humor without a tinge of deep cynicism. Several of the prints, for example,

include the figure of the client, whose bumbling hesitation and ineptitude is as thoroughly mocked as the brazen exhibitionism of the prostitutes who attempt to seduce him. Such mordant humor informs the largest and most elaborately worked print in the series, a pastelized monotype called the *Name Day of the Madame* (FIG. 6.125). Here business has been suspended so that the prostitutes may present their gifts and best wishes to the madame on the feast day of her patron saint. A more thorough debunking of one of the most hallowed rituals of conventional bourgeois family life would be hard to imagine.²⁵⁴

The sardonic pleasure Degas seems to have derived from documenting the most degrading aspects of prostitution, together with the ignoble, caricatured physiognomies he consistently imposed on its practitioners, raises the troubling issue of the artist's alleged misogyny. Are the brothel monotypes and related images expressive of some deep-seated disdain of women on Degas's part, as many of his contemporaries claimed, or are they refreshingly honest, if radically unsanitized, representations of the unfortunate facts of this particular way of life?²⁵⁵ While Degas's images do entail a certain tendency to emphasize and perhaps even exaggerate the vulgarity of the prostitute as a means of identifying and controlling—and ultimately of punishing—her, they also, through this very process, deny the titillating charms and voyeuristic pleasures characteristically built into more conventional representations of this theme.²⁵⁶ Degas's imagery denies the myth, so cheerily sustained in Manet's *Nana*, of the triumphant courtesan—the beautiful woman who, through minimal risk to herself, manages to seize the reins of power simply by servicing the needs of a repressed and sexually frustrated bourgeoisie. In Degas's world no such easy victories are possible; commercialized sex remains for him an abject, brutalizing affair, equally debasing for buyer and seller.

THE NEW PAINTING



6.126

Claude Monet
(1840-1926)

Impression, Sunrise, 1872

Oil on canvas,
17¼ x 21¼ in.
(48 x 63 cm)

Musée Marmottan

The abandonment of the Salon by the government in 1880 constituted the last chapter in what had been the long, painful demise of a once venerable and seemingly omnipotent institution. Throughout the nineteenth century, artists—academic and avant-garde alike—had consistently sought alternatives to the Salon, instituting a trend that culminated most famously in the ambitious one-man exhibitions staged by Courbet and Manet on the occasions of the expositions of 1855 and 1867.²⁵⁷ These exhibitions represent the most important manifestations of a sea change that was then taking place within the Parisian art world—an epochal shift from the state-financed, academically regulated model of art making to a private, nonofficial, entrepreneurial mode of cultural production that would go on to provide the social and economic basis for a self-consciously modernist avant-

garde. It is important to note that the eventual triumph of this new mode of production was not simply the result of the heroic exploits of a few isolated individuals; rather, the modernists' success depended on the establishment of new economic and cultural institutions that could offer them a viable alternative to the traditional academic system centered on the Salon. Paramount among these, as the influential sociologists Harrison and Cynthia White pointed out almost four decades ago, were the commercial art trade and the press—dealers to market the products of the avant-garde, and critics to publicize them.²⁵⁸ By the 1870s, both these ingredients of what the Whites aptly named the dealer-critic system were firmly in place. The stage was set for an artistic revolution in Paris.

Among the most important, and certainly the most celebrated, episodes in this revolutionary transition

from an academic to an entrepreneurial mode of artistic production was the series of eight exhibitions staged at irregular intervals between 1874 and 1886 by a group of young painters representing the cutting edge of artistic practice in France—the artists who would eventually be known as the Impressionists.²⁵⁹ During the 1860s and early 1870s, all of the painters who made up the core of this group—Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, Berthe Morisot, Camille Pissarro, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, and Alfred Sisley—had suffered the indignity of having at least one of their canvases rejected from the Salon. With the establishment of the *ordre morale* cultural regime in 1873, these artists must have realized that their prospects for success via traditional channels were even more remote than they had been during the later, “liberal” phase of the Second Empire, and it did not take long for their disillusionment to manifest itself in the form of plans for an alternative exhibition.

The decisive step in the development of the Impressionist exhibitions occurred on December 27, 1873, when a group of artists—Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley included—officially organized themselves into the Société Anonyme Coopérative des Artistes-Peintres, Sculpteurs, Graveurs.²⁶⁰ The charter of this group, which was modeled on that of a baker’s union in the provincial village of Pontoise, where Pissarro had settled after the war, called for membership to be open to all artists, regardless of aesthetic creed, who were willing to pay the annual dues of sixty francs. Such permissiveness suggests that the vaguely constituted Société Anonyme did not originally conceive of itself as representative of any particular stylistic impulse, although this issue had been (and would continue to be) the subject of considerable debate. The elitist, imperious Degas had argued for the inclusion of artists who had already made their reputations at the Salon as a means



6.127

Claude Monet
(1840–1926)

*Arrival of the
Normandy Train,
Gare Saint-Lazare,*
1877

Oil on canvas,
23½ x 31½ in.
(59.6 x 80.2 cm)
The Art Institute of
Chicago; Mr. and
Mrs. Martin A. Ryerson
Collection



6.128

Berthe Morisot
(1841-1895)

The Cradle, 1872

Oil on canvas,
22 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 18 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(56 x 46 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

of lending the enterprise some much-needed clout. By contrast, more politically and aesthetically liberal members such as Pissarro wanted to exclude all artists who were not committed to a certain level of artistic innovation. Degas's argument eventually carried the day, with the result that a total of thirty artists, only eight of whom would subsequently be recognized as Impressionists (Eugène Boudin, Cézanne, Degas, Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley) participated in the group's inaugural exhibition.

The first Impressionist exhibition opened on April 15, 1874, at 35 boulevard des Capucines in the former third-floor studio of the photographer Nadar. This was a prime location, for not only was Nadar's studio a familiar establishment among the Parisian beau monde, but the boulevard des Capucines itself was one of the most elegant commercial thoroughfares in the resurrected city. During its one-month run the exhibition attracted approximately 3,500 visitors, a considerable number considering the novelty of the enterprise.²⁶¹ The success of the exhibition was due at least in part to the amount of coverage it generated in the press. Over fifty reviews of the show were published, but although almost all the critics applauded the society's initiative in staging the exhibition, opinions about the quality of the works on display were mixed. "What do we see in the work of these men?" Etienne Carjat asked in his review for the *Patriote français*. "Nothing but a defiance, almost an insult to the taste and the intelligence of the public."²⁶² Of all the attacks launched against the Impressionists in 1874, none has enjoyed more art historical fame than the satirical review penned by Louis Leroy for the caricatural newspaper *Le Charivari*. Entitled "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," this article is often credited with having given the new school its name.²⁶³ It describes the descent into imbecility of a conventional—and totally fictitious—landscape painter named Joseph Vincent who had rashly ventured into the inaugural exhibition of the seemingly innocuous Société Anonyme. At first Vincent is properly enraged, ridiculing the "innumerable black tongue-lickings" that pass for figures in Monet's *Boulevard des Capucines* (see FIG. 6.85).²⁶⁴ Eventually, however, the shock proves too great, and the old artist begins to praise things that he would have condemned had he retained control of his senses. "Impression—I was certain of it," Vincent exclaims in

response to the title of one of Monet's most radically diffuse, loosely executed paintings, representing the sun rising above the mist-laden port of Le Havre (FIG. 6.126). "I was just telling myself that, since I was impressed, there had to be some impression in it . . . and what freedom, what ease of workmanship! Wallpaper in its embryonic state is more finished than that seascape!"²⁶⁵

Although there was certainly no shortage of critical disparagement in 1874, art historians have tended to overestimate the extent of the opposition to the new style. Among the artists reviewed most enthusiastically was Berthe Morisot, whose submissions to the inaugural exhibition included a modestly scaled but exquisitely executed painting titled *The Cradle* (FIG. 6.128). It represents a young mother, the artist's own sister, Edma, contemplating her sleeping child. Such pleasantly charming—indeed almost saccharine—subject matter is typical of Morisot and other late-nineteenth-century female artists, who in deference to social conventions that severely constricted their mobility in public tended to concentrate on themes dealing with the elegant rituals of intimate bourgeois life.²⁶⁶

Despite the relative critical success of the first exhibition of the Société Anonyme, this event did little to improve the precarious financial situation of most members of the group.²⁶⁷ Their continued vulnerability on this front was made painfully apparent in March 1875 when an auction of over seventy works by Monet, Morisot, Renoir, and Sisley ended in disaster. Not only were the prices fetched by the pictures insultingly low, but the auction itself was marred by the threat of physical violence, as confrontations between the defenders and detractors of the new style nearly descended into fisticuffs.²⁶⁸ This disastrous outing seems to have convinced the Impressionists of the futility of holding a second exhibition in 1875, and thus it was not until the spring of the following year that their works were again placed before the public as a group.

The second Impressionist exhibition, which opened on March 30, 1876, took place at 11 rue le Peletier in the elegantly appointed showrooms of Paul Durand-Ruel, one of the leading art dealers in Paris and the principal financial supporter of the group. On display were some 250 works by nineteen exhibitors. As had been the case in 1874, the "core" group of Impressionists (Degas,

Monet, Morisot, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley) were in the minority. Among the works on display, however, were some of the greatest icons of the movement: Monet's *La Grenouillère* (New York, Metropolitan Museum) and *Camille in a Japanese Robe* (see FIG. 6.66), Degas's *Portraits in an Office (New Orleans)* (Pau, Musée des Beaux-Arts), and Renoir's *Torso of a Woman in Sunlight* (Paris, Musée d'Orsay). The 1876 exhibition also marked the debut of Gustave Caillebotte with the group, an important event in the annals of Impressionism, as this talented painter, who also happened to be the son of an immensely wealthy textile manufacturer, would go on to provide much moral as well as financial support for his struggling colleagues in the coming years.

As had been the case in 1874, the second exhibition generated considerable attention in the press, with the reviews being predictably mixed.²⁶⁹ While conservative critics continued to express outrage at the Impressionists' impudence in defying what had for centuries served as the most basic tenets of artistic good taste and common sense, the 1876 exhibition elicited an important statement of support from the realist critic Edmond Duranty, whose long essay "The New Painting" functioned as something of a manifesto for the movement. Duranty praised the Impressionists for producing "an art that tries to capture life and the modern spirit, an art that reacts viscerally to the spectacle of reality and of contemporary life."²⁷⁰ The naturalist novelist Emile Zola (see FIG. 6.63) and the Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé also rallied to the Impressionist cause with stirring reviews of the 1876 exhibition that similarly celebrated the freshness and originality—the sheer modernity—of the art of the new group.²⁷¹

The reaction to the 1876 exhibition was sufficiently encouraging to prompt the group to stage another show the following April. Initial plans for this exhibition were made at a dinner party hosted by the newcomer Caillebotte, who also assumed responsibility for securing a venue for the show. He chose a private apartment located at 6 rue Le Peletier, just across the street from Durand-Ruel. The 1877 exhibition featured 241 works, over half of which were by members of the core group—Monet (FIG. 6.127), Degas (see FIGS. 6.123 and 6.124), Pissarro (FIG. 6.129), Renoir (FIG. 6.130), Sisley, Caillebotte (see FIG. 6.76), and Cézanne. Of all the artists associated with the New Painting,

Cézanne, who exhibited no fewer than sixteen works in 1877, was by far the most difficult for the public to appreciate. Such general befuddlement is not difficult to understand when we are confronted with the profound oddities that constitute his early *œuvre*. Among the works he exhibited in 1877 was a small canvas alternatively designated *Les Pêcheurs* or, more appropriately perhaps, *Scène fantastique* (FIG. 6.132). On one level, this picture exemplifies that most fundamental of Impressionist preoccupations—the representation of modern life in the form of the elegant rituals of middle-class leisure.²⁷² The attire of the gentleman in the lower left-hand corner as well as that of the women and children on the riverbank in the middle distance identifies them as members of the bourgeoisie enjoying an afternoon in an inviting parklike setting. Less typical of Impressionist pictures is the group of fisherman working around the boat at lower right, such references to labor generally having been excised from avant-garde painting by the mid-1870s.²⁷³ What ultimately differentiates Cézanne's picture from even the most daring works by his Impressionist colleagues, however, is the unrelieved crudity of its execution. In this remarkable little picture Cézanne dispenses with the most basic rules of sophisticated artistic engagement to an unprecedented degree. Anatomical correctness, the near-sacred conventions of linear and aerial perspective, the logical continuities of proportion and scale—all have been willfully disregarded in the artist's audacious attempt to develop a completely new and personal mode of expression. The results, to our eyes compelling, are shockingly inept by contemporary standards of artistic competence. Yet by 1877 there were critics sufficiently invested in the Impressionist cause to defend even this. "Paintings by Cézanne have the inexpressible charm of biblical and Greek antiquity," wrote Georges Rivière, the more or less official spokesman for the group in 1877. "The movement of the figures is simple and grand as in antique sculpture, and the landscapes have an imposing majesty."²⁷⁴

By the time the Impressionists next appeared collectively before the public in the spring of 1879, serious discord had begun to divide their ranks. Upon the insistence of Degas, now an unyielding opponent of anything that smacked of artistic officialdom, it was decreed that only artists who had formally renounced



the Salon would be allowed to participate in the group exhibitions.²⁷⁵ This stipulation barred several of the most important participants in previous shows, most notably Cézanne and Sisley, who continued to submit to the official exhibition (both were rejected), as well as Renoir, whose monumental portrait *Madame Charpentier and Her Children* (see FIG. 6.65) scored a major success at the Salon. Moreover Morisot, who had delivered her first child in November 1878, decided to abstain from the exhibition at the last minute.

Thus, when the fourth Impressionist exhibition opened its doors on April 10, 1879, at 28 avenue de l'Opéra, the ranks of the core group had been significantly depleted. In addition to Degas (FIG. 6.133) and Monet (see FIG. 6.116), only Pissarro—the sole artist to participate in all eight of the exhibitions—

was represented. The exclusions and desertions were at least partly made up for by the appearance of several important newcomers recruited by Degas, most notably the future Symbolist Paul Gauguin and Mary Cassatt, the expatriate American who made a stunning debut with a display of eleven paintings and pastels.

In 1880 Degas's insistence on excluding artists who exhibited at the Salon again resulted in a number of important omissions, most crucially Monet, who joined Renoir in submitting to the official exhibition. Cézanne and Sisley, meanwhile, abstained from exhibiting altogether. The resulting void was again filled by members of Degas's growing "clique"—artists such as Jean-Louis Forain and Jean-François Raffaëlli, a specialist in rather roughly hewn but conventionally detailed genre paintings of lower-class life in the grimy suburbs surrounding

6.129

Camille Pissarro
(1830-1903)

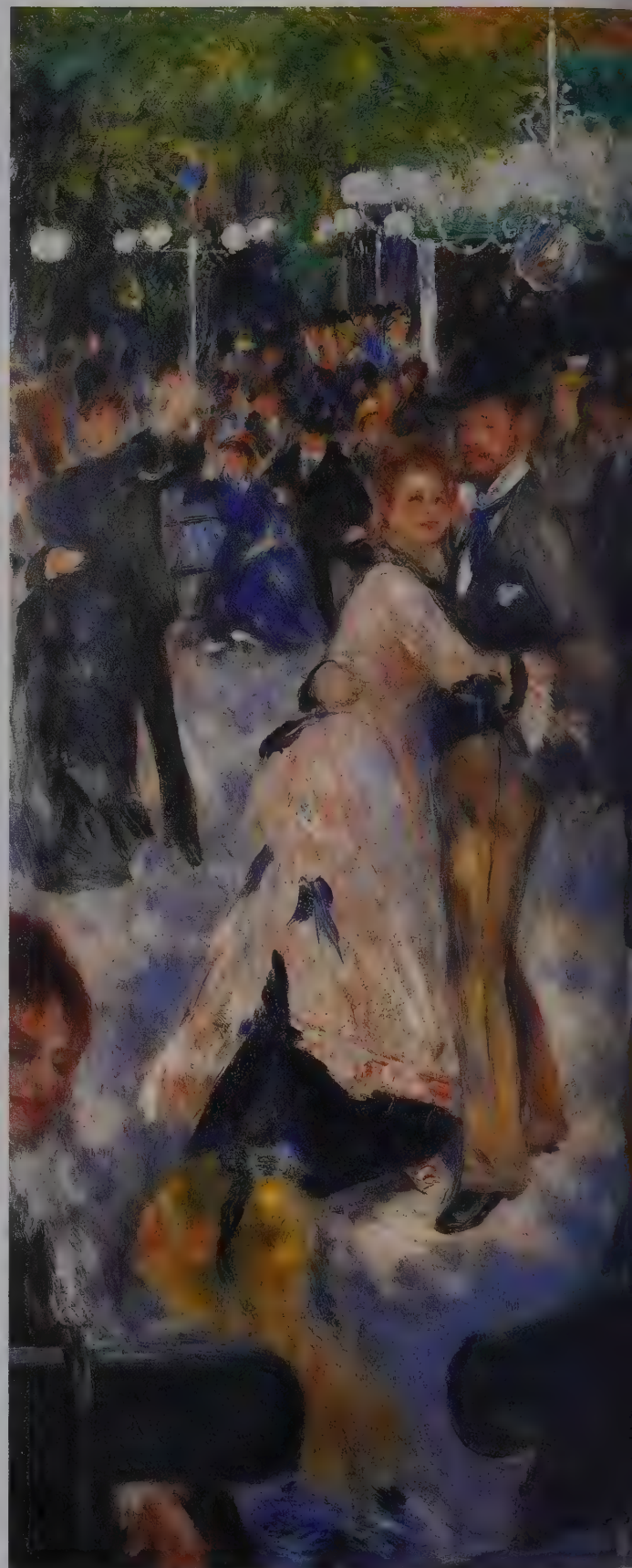
*The Garden of Les
Mathurins at Pontoise*,
1876

Oil on canvas,
44 7/8 x 65 1/8 in.
(112.7 x 165.4 cm)
The Nelson-Atkins
Museum of Art,
Kansas City, Missouri

Paris. It was, in fact, the huge display of over forty works by Raffaëlli—"a sort of Meissonier of poverty," as one reviewer aptly called him²⁷⁶—that garnered the lion's share of the critical approbation in 1880.²⁷⁷

The sixth Impressionist exhibition opened on April 2, 1881, at 35 boulevard des Capucines. This was the same address as the inaugural exhibition seven years earlier, only this time the show did not occupy the spacious studio of Nadar in the front of the building but a rather cramped and poorly lit apartment in the rear. Besides Degas, the only members of the original group who remained were Morisot and Pissarro. Monet, Renoir, and Sisley again opted for the Salon, while Caillebotte, increasingly resentful of the dominance of Degas's contingent, chose to abstain.²⁷⁸

Uniquely, the headliner of the 1881 exhibition was not a painting but a sculpture; it was on this occasion that Degas finally unveiled his most ambitious effort in this medium, and the only one to be publicly exhibited during his lifetime, *Little Dancer Aged Fourteen* (FIG. 6.134).²⁷⁹ The subsequent popularity of this sculpture, posthumous casts of which are displayed in museums throughout the world, makes it difficult to recapture the shock it provoked when it was unveiled in 1881. While a few of the most committed modernists eulogized *Little Dancer* as a masterpiece of sculptural realism, the vast majority of reviewers were utterly appalled by the profoundly unconventional character of the work. This critical exasperation was due in large part to the nontraditional materials from which the sculpture was constructed. The body of the figure was modeled in a mahogany- or bronze-colored wax, a distinctly non-noble medium more commonly associated with dolls or mannequins than with fine-art statuary. In an even more startling breach of high-art decorum, Degas dressed the figure in a real cloth bodice and gauze tutu. She also wore canvas slippers and a wig of actual hair that was plaited and tied with a ribbon in the back. While many reviewers attempted to make sense of such a startling compendium of materials by relating the *Little Dancer* to earlier traditions of mixed-media and polychromatic sculpture—the various artistic traditions of ancient Egypt, Tanagra, and medieval France and Spain were all suggested as possible art historical precedents for the work²⁸⁰—the majority believed that the *Little Dancer* defied the category of art. "What is



6.130

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
(1841–1919)

*Dancing at the Moulin
de la Galette*, 1876

Oil on canvas,
51 7/8 x 68 7/8 in.
(131 x 175 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



UNE VISITE AUX IMPRESSIONNISTES

Bibliothèque Nationale de France

It is highly unlikely that Degas, whose interest in the popular pseudo-science of physiognomy is well documented,²⁸⁵ was surprised by the critical response to the *Dancer*. Rather, as in his *Women on the Terrace* described above (see FIG. 6.124), the artist seems to have gone out of his way to incorporate into the sculpture an array of physical attributes regarded at the time as signs of atavism. The figure's low, sloping forehead and tiny button chin, her heavy jaw and prominently projecting "muzzle" (to borrow the term used repeatedly by the critics²⁸⁶), were all widely regarded in the nineteenth century as manifestations of a more primitive stage of human development, and there can be little doubt that Degas meant these characteristics to signify as such in his sculpture. Of course, where the artist would have disagreed with his detractors was in the potential artfulness of the resulting ensemble. For whereas the majority of critics continued to contend that artistic commemoration should be reserved for the most noble aspects of humanity, Degas, arguably the most audacious and uncompromising realist of them all, believed that no aspect of the human experience, however "low" or



distasteful, should escape the interrogating gaze of the artist.

Degas's three-year domination of what he preferred to call the "Independent" as opposed to the "Impressionist" exhibitions ended abruptly in 1882 with the reemergence of several former members of the group. Monet, Renoir, and Sisley returned to the fold, rejoining Morisot and the ever-faithful Pissarro as well as Caillebotte. Only Cézanne, who had finally managed to get one of his canvases by the jury at the Salon,²⁸⁷ and Degas were absent. The latter had been invited to participate but chose to abstain rather than betray his protégés, whose exclusion had been insisted upon by several other members of the group.²⁸⁸

The seventh exhibition opened on March 1, 1882, at 251 rue Saint-Honoré in a spacious hall that had

formerly housed a military panorama. Of the approximately 200 works on display, about three-quarters were landscapes by members of the core group (Monet, Morisot, Renoir, and Sisley), making this exhibition the most stylistically coherent—and programmatically "Impressionist"—to date. Indeed, it was only in 1882 that the soon-to-be standard conception of Impressionism as an artistic movement centered upon the production of landscapes *en plein air* manifested itself in the form of an exhibition.²⁸⁹

Despite the numerical dominance of the landscapists in 1882, it was the figure painters who continued to preoccupy the critics, as a collection of caricatures of the works on display published in *Le Charivari* amply demonstrates (FIG. 6.131). Not surprisingly, Caillebotte's meticulously detailed scenes of modern urban life as

6.132

Paul Cézanne
(1839–1906)

Scène fantastique,
c. 1873

Oil on canvas,
21 5/8 x 32 1/2 in.
(54 x 81.3 cm)
Private collection



6.133

Edgar Degas
(1834–1917)

*La La at the Cirque
Fernando, Paris, 1879*

Oil on canvas,
46 x 30½ in.
(116.8 x 77.5 cm)
National Gallery,
London

well as Pissarro's somewhat sentimentalized representations of peasants were favorably received, as was the diverse collection of figure paintings by Renoir.²⁹⁰ The latter, who had been experiencing considerable success as a society portraitist since the late 1870s, had recently returned from Italy where he had gone to seek inspiration for his increasingly conservative manner in the celebrated masterpieces of the Italian Renaissance. These tendencies are readily apparent in his most ambitious work in the 1882 exhibition, *Luncheon of the Boating Party* (1880–81; The Philips Collection, Washington, D.C.). In this monumental canvas, executed prior to the artist's departure for Italy, Renoir skillfully combines the precise drawing style and firm modeling of the Old Masters with the lively brushwork and scintillating colorism of the modernists. Thus, like so much of the artist's later production, the *Luncheon* is a self-conscious

act of conciliation—an attempt to strike a balance between the old and the new that would have something to please—and virtually nothing to offend—the widest potential audience.

Despite the considerable critical acclaim of the 1882 exhibition, it would be four more years before the Impressionists would exhibit as a group again. By this time, the artistic landscape of Paris had changed considerably, as artists were faced with an ever-expanding range of opportunities to market their work. In 1884, the Société des Artistes Indépendants launched an important series of juryless exhibitions to counter the no longer official but still aesthetically conservative Salon. Even more important, by the mid-1880s private dealers had begun to assume an increasingly important role in the public presentation of avant-garde art. In the spring of 1883 Durand-Ruel staged a series of one-man exhibitions devoted to Monet, Renoir, Pissarro, and Sisley.²⁹¹ The year before, Georges Petit, Durand-Ruel's chief rival in the marketing of modern art, had launched a series of annual Expositions Internationales in his sumptuously appointed galleries on the rue de Sèze. It did not take long for the Impressionists to find their way into this exclusive, invitation-only affair, Monet being the first to participate in 1885.

The complexities of this new situation impacted the preparations for the eighth exhibition, which were again marred by factionalism. In the end, several important members of the group decided to abstain, most notably Monet and Renoir, who exhibited with Petit instead. The absence of these two artists, coupled with the defections of Caillebotte and Sisley, allowed for the resurfacing of Degas and his ever-controversial contingent (Cassatt, Forain, Henri Rouart, Federico Zandomenighi, and so on). This group failed to achieve the dominance they had enjoyed at the beginning of the decade, however, as their presence in 1886 was countered by the emergence of a new artist, Georges Seurat, whose large, ambitious works were executed in a radically new and decidedly non-Impressionistic manner (FIG. 6.138).

The inclusion of Seurat, along with his friend and imitator Paul Signac (FIGS. 6.135 and 6.136), had been the source of tremendous controversy in the months leading up to the opening of the exhibition. Morisot and her husband, Eugène Manet, were adamantly opposed, but Seurat's cause was valiantly supported

by the always open-minded Pissarro, who had already begun experimenting with the younger artist's revolutionary technique. Pissarro eventually prevailed, although it was decreed that the works of his protégés would be segregated from the rest in a separate room of the exhibition.

Upon Degas's insistence, it was decided that the eighth exhibition, which was held in rooms above the fashionable restaurant La Maison Dorée at the corner of rue Laffitte and the boulevard des Italiens, would open on May 15. This was significant because it meant that the exhibition would run in direct competition with the Salon. It was undoubtedly this circumstance, along with the fact that the novelty of independently organized exhibitions was beginning to wear off, that accounts for the relative lack of public and critical interest in the event.²⁹² What excitement there was tended to be focused on two groups of images—Degas's suite of pastel bathers and the contributions of the newcomer Seurat.

With the *Bathers*, Degas set out to revolutionize one of the most hallowed iconographic traditions in all of Western art—the female nude. His modernization of the genre began with a radical reconceptualization of the bather theme. Instead of the ideally beautiful, nymphlike creatures frolicking in the open air normally connoted by the term *baigneuse* (FIG. 4.163), Degas presented viewers with a series of emphatically unidealized women “washing themselves, drying themselves, wiping themselves, combing their hair or having their hair combed.”²⁹³ (FIG. 6.137). No less extraordinarily, these women assume the most imminently natural but utterly graceless postures. They do not pose for the viewer but stoop and squat, or bend over unceremoniously as they go about the task of getting themselves clean. The artist was completely cognizant of the novelty of this approach. “Hitherto,” he explained, “the nude has always been represented in poses which presupposed an audience.” Degas wanted to eradicate this element of self-conscious display—to present his models as being totally unaware of the presence of the viewer, as if they were being peeped at “through a keyhole.”²⁹⁴

The critical interest provoked by Degas's *Bathers* was surpassed only by the reaction to Seurat's principal contribution to the 1886 exhibition, *Sunday Afternoon on the Island of the Grande Jatte* (1884) (FIG. 6.138). This picture was destined to call attention to itself

by virtue of its size alone; measuring some six by ten feet (2 by 3 meters), it was among the largest works ever included in an Impressionist exhibition. Indeed, with this painting Seurat seems to have reclaimed for the avant-garde the heroic scale normally associated with the *grandes machines* of the Académie. In the process, he also interrupted (however briefly) the growing commercialism of the avant-garde; for the *Grande Jatte* was emphatically not the small, portable, domestically scaled picture that had become the lifeblood of the



6.134
Edgar Degas
(1834–1917)
*Little Dancer Aged
Fourteen*, 1878–81
Wax and fabric, height:
39 in. (99 cm)
Collection of Mr. and
Mrs. Paul Mellon



6.135
Paul Signac (1863–1935)
The Milliners, 1885–86
Oil on canvas,
46 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 35 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(116 x 89 cm)
Foundation E. G. Bührle
Collection, Zurich

new “dealer-critic” system of artistic exchange. This was a large, monumentally scaled work—one meant for public consumption, not the private delectation of individual collectors.

In terms of its subject matter, the *Grande Jatte* perpetuated the classic Impressionist fascination with the spectacle of modern leisure. Seurat represents a cross-section of the Parisian bourgeoisie milling about on the Grande Jatte, an island in the middle of the Seine in the suburb of Asnières, just to the west of central Paris.²⁹⁵ What most distinguishes Seurat’s picture from the modern-life paintings of his Impressionist

predecessors is its utter joylessness.²⁹⁶ A pall of boredom and perhaps even melancholy hangs over this riverside retreat, as the strangely robotic, automaton-like figures seem simply to be going through the motions of an imposed ritual from which they receive remarkably little pleasure. It was precisely this forced, joyless atmosphere that struck many commentators. Henry Fèvre, for instance, noted how perfectly the *Grande Jatte* captured “the stiffness of Parisian promenading, formal and shapeless, where even recreation amounts to posing.”²⁹⁷ Similarly, Paul Adam appreciated how “even the stiffness of the people, with their cookie-cutter forms, helps give the sound of the modern, the recall of our cramped clothing, glued to our bodies, the reserve of our gestures, the British cant imitated by everyone. . . . M. Seurat has perfectly seen, understood, conceived and translated that with the pure drawing of the primitives.”²⁹⁸

The disconcertingly mechanistic quality of the action in the *Grande Jatte* is attributable in large part to the manner in which the painting was executed. Emphatically rejecting the loose and irregular, ostensibly spontaneous brushwork of the Impressionists, Seurat has reduced his strokes to a seemingly uniform application of tiny oblong daubs of paint. These are the immediate predecessors of the infamous points or “dots” that the artist would utilize more consistently in his later, more legitimately “pointillist” works (FIG. 6.139).²⁹⁹ In the *Grande Jatte* these regularized strokes act to homogenize and unify the surface of the picture, creating an effect similar to that of the uniform weave of a tapestry. Such a technique, although remarkably effective in terms of evoking the subtleties of light and color as well as suggesting the rotundity of three-dimensional form, leaves little opportunity for the characterization of figures, who become strangely generic, recognizable only as social types, not as unique individuals.

In standardizing his stroke to such a radical degree, Seurat was responding to a growing awareness within the ranks of the avant-garde of the limitations of Impressionism. By the mid-1880s, programmatic *plein-airisme*, as manifested most immediately in the loose, lively brushwork of artists like Morisot and Monet, had come to be regarded less as a guarantor of authenticity than as a kind of automatic constraint on the profundity of the work. Impressionism was, in short, coming to

be regarded as an essentially irrational, radically non-methodical art form, one that was limited to the spontaneous recording of the artist's intuitive, unthinking response to a world of purely sensual phenomena. Seurat, like so many artists of his generation, wanted to penetrate beneath this surface of Impressionist appearance; and to this end he developed a more rational, methodical technique with the power to analyze as well as describe. The artist was no longer interested in simply recording the visible spectacle of modern life—he wanted to dissect it.³⁰⁰

The rationalist impulse informing the standardization of Seurat's technique was also responsible for the other celebrated innovation of the *Grande Jatte*—the deconstruction of the “merely” visual phenomenon of local color into an array of contrasting constituent tones. This complicated process, which Seurat liked to call *chromo-luminarisme*, was patiently explained to the public by the Symbolist critic Félix Fénéon in an enthusiastic review of the 1886 exhibition:

If you consider a few square inches of uniform tone in Monsieur Seurat's *Grande Jatte*, you will find on each inch of its surface, in a whirling host of tiny spots, all the elements which make up the tone. Take this grass plot in the shadow: most of the strokes render the local value of the grass; others, orange tinted and thinly scattered, express the scarcely felt action of the sun. . . . These colors, isolated on the canvas, recombine on the retina: we have therefore, not a mixture of material colors (pigments), but a mixture of differently colored rays of light.³⁰¹

There was nothing particularly revolutionary in Seurat's reliance on the technique of optical mixing to enhance the luminosity of his work; artists as early as Delacroix had employed similar strategies to heighten the color of their canvases.³⁰² What was new to Seurat was the pretension to science—presenting his technique as a formula or code for the deployment of color superior to the spontaneous and intuitive painterly free-for-all then associated with Impressionism.

6.136

Paul Signac (1863–1935)

Snow, Boulevard de Clichy, Paris, 1886

Oil on canvas,
18¹¹/₁₆ x 25¹³/₁₆ in.
(48.1 x 65.56 cm)
The Minneapolis
Institute of Arts;
bequest of Putnam
Dana McMillan



Degas 85



Of course, the rhetoric of science informing Seurat's execution of the *Grande Jatte* and the masterpieces that followed was just that—rhetoric. For it is not the combining of constituent tones into one unified field of color that dominates our experience of the painting but rather the marvelously scintillating effects of individual strokes of pigment locked in a perpetual battle to assert their autonomy over their neighbors; the celebrated “dots” of the painting, in short, never really disappear. In the end, therefore, it was not merely the scientific rigor of Seurat's use of color nor the novelty of his “pointillist” technique that was responsible for inaugurating a new art historical era at the eighth Impressionist exhibition of 1886; rather, it was the artist's insistence on penetrating beneath the Impressionist veneer that makes Seurat the first great “Post-Impressionist” artist.

Impressionists of the Petit Boulevard

Among the works on display in the “pointillist” room of the last Impressionist exhibition was a charming Parisian snowscape by Paul Signac (FIG. 6.136), a young painter who was destined to become the second most important representative of neo-Impressionism after Seurat. The picture represents the boulevard de Clichy blanketed by a thin layer of freshly fallen January snow. Neo-Impressionist systematicity is evident in the artist's repetitive dot-like brushstrokes as well as in his programmatic contrast of complimentary colors—characteristics seen most readily in the flurry of blue and orange daubs of pigment describing the omnibus tracks in the foreground as well as the sides of the buildings bracketing the boulevard. At the same time, however, the casual, de-centered composition of the painting and pocket of pedestrian activity in the middle distance recall the bustling cityscapes of the Impressionists more immediately than the preternaturally ordered, silent scenes of contemporary life by Seurat. Not surprisingly, several reviewers of the last Impressionist exhibition preferred the relaxed, casual pointillism of the *Boulevard de Clichy* to the more rigid, uncompromising—some would say cold and mechanistic—technique of the *Grande Jatte*.³⁰³

Signac's picture signals an important shift that occurred in avant-garde painting in the mid 1880s—

a shift that was generational and geographic no less than stylistic. By the time of their last group exhibition in 1886, most of the Impressionists had reached middle age—Degas, born in 1834, was fifty-two, while the slightly younger Monet and Renoir were well into their forties. These artists were also quickly being absorbed into the artistic establishment. As we have already seen, Renoir and Monet had entered the stable of artists promoted by Georges Petit and Paul Durand-Ruel, two of the most important and prestigious dealers of contemporary art in Paris. Although the increasingly reclusive Degas virtually stopped exhibiting after 1886, the few canvases that he permitted to leave his studio regularly fetched handsome sums on the market. Yet no sooner had Parisians become acclimated to the brilliant colors and sketchy brushwork of the Impressionists, than a subsequent generation of young Turks arrived on the scene with a new set of challenges for the art-viewing public. Most of these artists, generally (and rather generically) referred to as “Post-Impressionists,” would reject the fundamentally naturalist outlook underlying the plein-air painting of their predecessors, adopting instead a range of stylistic alternatives that, as we have seen in the case of Seurat, granted priority to deliberation over spontaneity, analysis over description, expression over depiction.

The undisputed geographic center of this wave of what might more appropriately be called “post-naturalist” painting was Montmartre. Little more than a rural outpost in 1800, this soon-to-be legendary hill was progressively engulfed by the ever-expanding capital over the course of the succeeding century. By 1880 its southern slopes had been fully incorporated into the city, forming a rather dingy working-class district most famous for its burgeoning industry of popular entertainment. (That most storied of all fin-de-siècle pleasure palaces, the Moulin-Rouge, opened its doors on the boulevard de Clichy in 1889). It was both the cheapness of its accommodations and the decadence of its nightlife that attracted artists to Montmartre; indeed, they flocked to the area in such numbers that Vincent Van Gogh, who passed a brief but crucial phase of his career in Paris, came to refer to himself and the other members of his generation as “Impressionists of the Petit Boulevard,” a term meant to distinguish these young artists struggling to eke out a professional existence on

6.137 (opposite)

Edgar Degas (1834–1917)

Woman Bathing in a Shallow Tub, 1885

Pastel on paper,
32 x 22 in. (81.3 x 55.9 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum
of Art; H. O. Havemeyer
Collection, bequest of Mrs.
H. O. Havemeyer, 1929

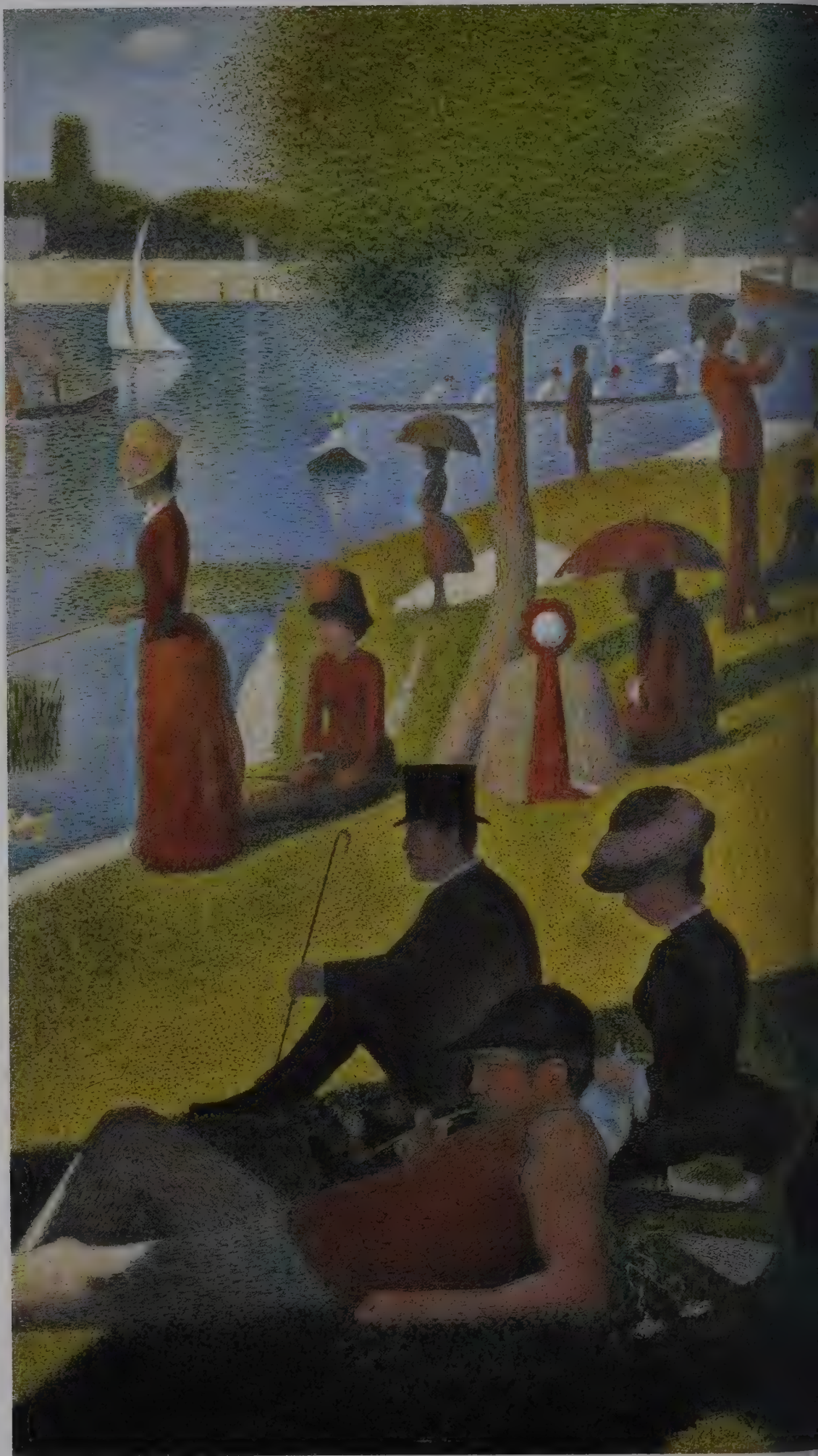
6.138

Georges Seurat (1859–1891)

A Sunday on La Grande Jatte—1884, 1884–86

Oil on canvas, 83 x 123¼ in. (207.6 x 308 cm)

The Art Institute of Chicago; Helen Birch
Bartlett Memorial Collection





the margins of the city from the likes of Monet, Renoir and Degas, who had graduated to the kind of critical and financial respectability epitomized by the chic and glamorous “Grand Boulevards” of central Paris.³⁰⁴

The boulevard de Clichy was one of the hubs of this burgeoning art district. Both Signac and Seurat had studios there, as did Félix Cormon, a more-or-less conventional, establishment painter through whose atelier a surprising number of avant-garde artists (e.g., van Gogh, Signac, Toulouse-Lautrec, Emile Bernard) passed. Something of the makeshift, work-a-day character of the neighborhood can be gleaned from Signac's picture. Although wide and relentlessly straight, this particular stretch of the boulevard de Clichy lacks the imposing grandeur of its more centrally located counterparts. This effect has a lot to do with the quarter's decidedly utilitarian, rather ramshackle architecture—the modest brick-and-mortar buildings bordering the boulevard in Signac's painting could hardly be more unlike the massive, stone-faced apartment blocks lining the avenues in the Impressionist's pictures of Haussmann's refurbished city (FIG. 6.85).

The “pointillist” method of Seurat and Signac was just one of several stylistic alternatives to Impressionism that emerged in the last half of the 1880s, a period of extraordinary ferment but also fragmentation within the Parisian avant-garde. While the neo-Impressionists looked primarily to science as a means of reinvesting art with methodological rigor and intellectual profundity, a rival faction moved in a very different direction, seeking radically to simplify—and thereby intensify—the effects of their art by adopting the blunt forms of what were then regarded as “primitive” artistic prototypes. An early masterpiece in this emerging tradition is Louis Anquetin's *La Place Clichy* (FIG. 6.140), another Parisian street-scene depicting a bustling thoroughfare only a few meters hundred meters to the north of that represented by Signac. When this picture, along with several other works by Anquetin, was displayed at the avant-garde exhibition Les XX in Brussels in February 1888, the critic Edouard Dujardin, a childhood friend of the painter, perceptively compared its compartmentalized forms, consisting largely of flat, unmodulated expanses of color bordered by thick black outlines, with various “primitive” artistic traditions, including Japanese prints, popular woodcuts

and cloisonné enamels. It was the latter analogy that gave this particular style—the full expressive and decorative potential of which would be realized in subsequent years by Gauguin—its name: cloisonism.³⁰⁵

Anquetin's adoption of a radically simplified pictorial vocabulary in *La Place Clichy* was due in large part to the influence of his new friend and colleague Vincent van Gogh. This artist, who had been working in a self-consciously crude, darkly realist manner in his native Holland since the beginning of the 1880s, arrived in Paris in March 1886, allegedly having never seen an Impressionist canvas. The young Dutchman was immediately introduced into the very latest developments of French painting by his younger brother and protector, Théo, who managed a branch of the gallery Boussod, Valadon et C^{ie}, specializing in contemporary art. The largely self-taught van Gogh proved to be a quick study; he promptly absorbed the principal conventions not only of the Impressionism of Monet and Renoir but the neo-Impressionism of Signac and Seurat as well. What the young artist made of these precedents can be seen in his *Vegetable Gardens and the Moulin de Blute-Fin on Montmartre* (FIG. 6.141), a view of the hill's sparsely populated northern slope. The unrelenting brightness and scintillating colors of the canvas, which was almost certainly painted *en plein air*, is pure Impressionism; its quasi-repetitive, hatch-like brushstrokes, however, represent the impatient and somewhat impetuous artist's adaptation of the notorious neo-Impressionist “dot.” Despite such modernity, *Vegetable Gardens* is not wholly disconnected from earlier art historical traditions. Most notably, the artist, motivated by patriotism or perhaps even a tinge of homesickness, exaggerated the size of the sails of the windmill on the horizon, thereby investing this glimpse of a rather shabby Parisian suburb with a peacefully bucolic, Dutch air.³⁰⁶

What was perhaps the most definitive influence on van Gogh's subsequent development as an artist was his exposure to Japanese prints, the beauty and ingenuity of which the artist never tired of proselytizing. And here it should be noted that van Gogh's *japonisme*, unlike that of most of his fellow enthusiasts, was not a matter of mere formal borrowings but rather had a powerful spiritual component as well.³⁰⁷ The artist naively—and quite erroneously—regarded Japan



as the land of a kind of primitive, simple people, the defining characteristic and greatest virtue of which was an all-abiding love of and respect for nature. It was precisely this simple and direct brand of naturalism—one bordering, in fact, on pantheism—that van Gogh hoped to capture in his own Japanese-inspired canvases.

Although remembered today primarily as a landscapist and still-life painter, van Gogh himself considered portraiture to be the key to the future development of modern art.³⁰⁸ And it was during his two-year stint in Paris that the artist produced his first mature masterpieces in this genre. One of the most moving of these represents Agostina Segatori, a former artist's model who had become proprietress of the Café du Tambourin, a favorite haunt of the "Petit Boulevard" artists (FIG. 6.142). La Segatori, a close friend and perhaps even lover of van Gogh, sits stiffly before a flat featureless background that inevitably recalls the collapsed spaces of Japanese prints. In another portrait (Rijksmuseum Vincent van Gogh, Amsterdam), La Segatori is shown

seated at one of the tables in her café, with a large Japanese print of a geisha hanging on the wall seen over her shoulder. This detail is almost certainly meant to commemorate the exhibition van Gogh staged in Le Tambourin of his own extensive collection of Japanese prints—an important event of 1887 that played a crucial rôle in perpetuating interest in Japanese art among the emerging generation of artists.³⁰⁹ Japanese prints play an even greater role in what is arguably van Gogh's greatest and most important Parisian portrait—*Père Tanguy*, a kind of manifesto painting articulating both the artist's aesthetic and social ideals at the end of his two-year sojourn in the French capital (FIG. 6.143).

A socialist and ex-Communist who had been sent into exile following the *semaine sanglante*, Julien Tanguy returned to Paris in 1873 where he opened an art supply shop on the rue Clauzel. In subsequent years Tanguy ingratiated himself with the young artists of the avant-garde by generously extending them credit and regularly displaying their otherwise vilified canvases

6.139

Georges Seurat
(1859–1891)

*Invitation to the
Sideshow (La Parade
de Cirque)*, c. 1888

Oil on canvas,
39¼ x 59 in.
(99.7 x 149.9 cm)
The Metropolitan
Museum of Art;
bequest of Stephen C.
Clark, 1960

6.140

Louis Anquetin
(1861-1932)

La Place Clichy, 1887

Oil on canvas,
27 1/4 x 21 in.

(69.2 x 53.3 cm)

Wadsworth Atheneum,
Hartford, Connecticut;
Ella Gallup Sumner
and Mary Catlin
Sumner Collection



in his shop, which, as Carol Zemel has perceptively observed, emerged as something of an “alternative space” for those seeking truly daring, experimental art.³¹⁰ Such comportment could not have failed to impress van Gogh, himself an exceptionally charitable and kindhearted person with a pronounced anti-Capitalist, Utopian streak. And indeed, it is precisely Tanguy’s simplicity and humility that the artist chose to emphasize in this portrait.³¹¹ Modestly attired in a roughly hewn jacket and plain straw hat, Tanguy sits in the exact center of the canvas, his kindly but slightly unfocused eyes and large, knotted hands subtly attesting to the trials of his tumultuous existence. The resulting image is that of a kind of worker-merchant, the “Petit Boulevard” counterpart to the swaggering artistic financiers of the “Grand Boulevards.”

Aesthetically, of course, the dominant note sounded by *Père Tanguy* is its *japonisme*. Forming a kind of cloth of honor behind the iconically posed merchant is

a wall of brightly colored Japanese prints. Their inclusion ultimately has less to do with the professional activities of Tanguy, who did not deal in such imagery, than the aesthetic proclivities of van Gogh, whose canvases were increasingly indebted to the vibrantly colored and radically flattened forms found in Japanese prints. Somewhat ironically given his essentially naturalist appreciation of this tradition, van Gogh’s emotive, expressionistic adaptations of Japanese art would go on to provide one of the principal impetuses behind the development of abstraction in early twentieth-century art. An almost startlingly precocious harbinger of this development can be found in the lower corners of *Père Tanguy*, both of which are occupied by two rectangles made up primarily of stripes of complimentary colors—vertical blue and yellow bars at left balanced by red and green bands at right. Undoubtedly inspired by the color theories of the Neo-Impressionists, these entirely abstract, non-mimetic patches signal the impend-

6.141

Vincent van Gogh
(1853–1890)

*Vegetable Gardens and
the Moulin de Blute-Fin
on Montmartre,*
c. July 1887

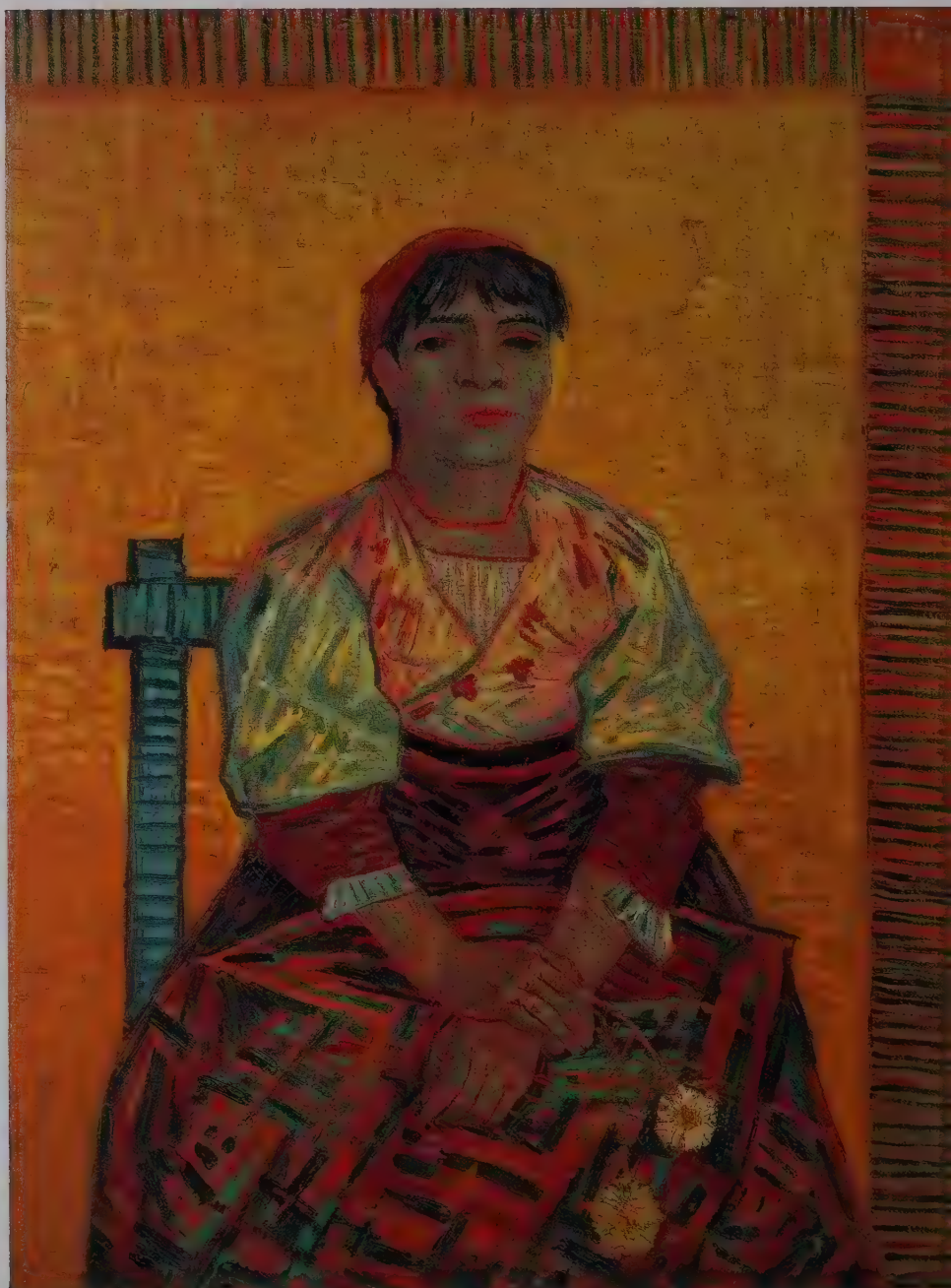
Oil on canvas,
27 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 48 in.
(69 x 120 cm)

Rijksmuseum van Gogh,
Amsterdam; gift of
the Society of
Contemporary Art



ing break with visible reality as the ultimate touchstone of artistic expression in the West. Thus, if something of Matisse and the Fauves can be detected in the collapsed spaces and brilliant, non-naturalistic colors of the Japanese prints forming the background of *Père Tanguy*, hints of Mondrian and De Stijl lurk in the two abstract rectangles in the portrait's lower corners. By way of

van Gogh and the other "Petit Boulevard" artists seeking an alternative to Impressionist naturalism, modernity was quickly giving way to Modernism as the dominant ethos of the avant-garde; the century-long tradition of representing contemporary life was ceding its centrality to purely formal investigations as the ultimate end of self-consciously progressive, modern art.



6.142

Vincent van Gogh
(1853-1890)

*The Italian: Agostina
Segatori, winter 1886-87*

Oil on canvas,
27 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 47 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(81 x 60 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



6.143

Vincent van Gogh
(1853-1890)

*Portrait of Père Tanguy,
Half-Length, 1887-88*

Oil on canvas,
36 1/4 x 29 1/2 in.
(92 x 75 cm)
Musée Rodin



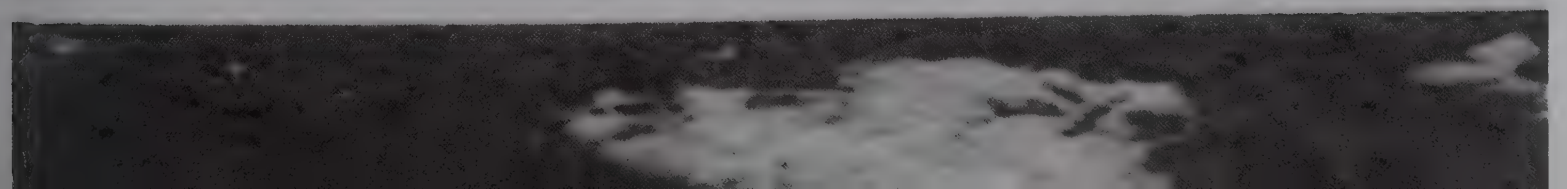




(pages 1072-1073)
J. K.
The Champ de Mars, 1986

(this page)
Edouard Boubat
(b. 1923)
Snow in the
Luxembourg Gardens,
1955

(opposite)
J. K.
The Luxembourg Gardens,
1987





Ferdinando Scianna
(b. 1946)

Sunday in the
Bois de Boulogne,
1978



Inge Morath
(1923-2002)

Pool at the foot
of the Tuileries Gardens,
1957







7.1 (above)

Théodore-Alexandre Steinlen (1859–1923)

Poster for *Paris* by Emile Zola, 1897

Color lithograph, 55 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 78 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (140 x 200 cm)

Musée de la Publicité

7.153 (gatefold)

Robert Delaunay (1885–1941)

The City of Paris, 1912 (detail)

Oil on canvas, 105 x 159 $\frac{13}{16}$ in. (267 x 406 cm)

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

If Rome, now so near its death, had ruled the ancient world, it was Paris that reigned with sovereign sway over the modern era; and had for the time become the great centre of the nations as they were carried on from civilisation to civilisation, in a sunward course from east to west. Paris was the world's brain. Its past so full of grandeur had prepared it for the part of initiator, civiliser, and liberator. Only yesterday it had cast the cry of Liberty among the nations, and tomorrow it would bring them the religion of Science, the new faith awaited by the democracies. And Paris was also gaiety, kindness, and gentleness, passion for knowledge and generosity without limit. Among the workmen of its faubourgs and the peasants of its country-sides there were endless reserves of men on whom the future might freely draw. And the century ended with Paris, and the new century would begin and spread with it. All the clamour of its prodigious labour, all the light that came from it as from a beacon overlooking the earth, all the thunder and tempest and triumphant brightness that sprang from its entrails, were pregnant with that final splendour, of which human happiness would be compounded.

Marie raised a light cry of admiration as she pointed toward the city. "Look! just look!" she exclaimed; "Paris is all golden, covered with a harvest of gold!"

They all re-echoed her admiration, for the effect was really one of extraordinary magnificence. The declining sun was once more veiling the immensity of Paris with golden dust. . . .

— EMILE ZOLA, *PARIS* (1899),
translated by Alfred Vizetelly



Paris remained Paris in spite of change.

HENRY ADAMS, 1906

What is the most advantageous way to view the city of Paris? The question is not just one for tourists. In nineteenth-century French literature about the city, writers such as Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Charles Baudelaire, and Emile Zola associated specific points of view with various forms of urban experience. From the vantage of the *flâneur*, for example (of which Baudelaire is the most celebrated proponent), modern Paris unfolds itself over time to the roving observer, who moves through the traffic of the boulevard but remains aloof in spirit. The experience of the *flâneur* is close-up, although his pose is that of the distanced onlooker; through his eyes the city appears as a spectacle of sensation and display. Conversely, through the device of the panorama (see above, pages 738–39, 885–86), Paris is beheld from afar. In particular, the panoramic view from above came to imply an all-encompassing perspective, one that enabled the author/narrator (or his protagonist) to project personal sentiments onto the sweeping backdrop of Paris, a great theater of human events. In fiction throughout the century, such a vista was achieved from a number of places, including Notre-Dame cathedral, Père Lachaise cemetery, the Panthéon, and Montmartre—not to mention numerous garret windows.

In 1889 Paris was presented with a new lookout from an unprecedented altitude, which would dramatically transform urban perspective: the Eiffel Tower, that monument to progress created for the Exposition Universelle. Radically steep and sheer, the Eiffel Tower offered a fixed aerial view of Paris that would eventually become an indispensable motif of modernist vision in the works of artists and writers such as Robert Delaunay and Guillaume Apollinaire. From this height, Paris transcended its own geography.

With historical perspective, the tower can also be said to have provided not just a physical vantage on Paris but also a metaphorical one. Both celebrated and reviled in its day, the Eiffel Tower was addressed at once as a technological advance and an aesthetic abomination that violated the city's great beauty. In retrospect, these two extremes can be said to contain a conflict

that governed the artistic climate in Paris during the period of 1889 to 1914. That age of modernism witnessed an astonishing degree of innovation and rapid change. From Neo-Impressionism to Cubism, art endured a transformation over the course of twenty-five years that was arguably more extreme than anything that had occurred during the previous two hundred and fifty, and Paris lay at the very center of this great metamorphosis. Such new styles were, however, attacked by many observers as eccentric and ugly. Indeed, just as the so-called avant-garde flourished in Paris during this period, so did contrary tendencies emerge, especially in architecture and the decorative arts, as various historical styles were revived in the name of French tradition. Ultimately, modernism in Paris was accompanied by a profound sense of cultural ambivalence and loss, sentiments that were often evoked to lament the changing aesthetic identity of the city itself.

The Exposition Universelle of 1889, for which the Eiffel Tower was created as a symbolic centerpiece, was a festival of French pride. At a time of political scandal, severe recession, and crushing unemployment, the fair enabled the state to boost collective faith by fabricating a spectacle of national achievement. Marking the centenary of the French Revolution, the exposition would be a sprawling tribute to the putative triumph of Third Republic liberalism, the fulfillment of the Revolution's promise of social and material progress. This, at least, was the boast. In truth, the exposition was also meant to correct, through education and example, the social ills of industrialization, which were threatening Republican ideals. The fragmenting and alienating effects of mechanized labor, for instance, might be challenged by using the fair as a demonstration of communal effort, as well as a stimulus to lagging economic growth. If, ultimately, the future of France was linked to a resurgence of nationalism and imperialism (which would reshape the liberal Republican agenda),¹ the exposition remained a model for the dynamics of progress.

The planners of the fair wanted monuments of technological advance to promote the new socioindustrial ethos. Iron architecture was selected as the ideal

7.2 (opposite)

Gustave Eiffel
(1832–1923)

Eiffel Tower, 1889

medium, and its ideal manifestation was the Eiffel Tower (FIG. 7.3),² created by the Maison Gustave Eiffel. The tower was the sentinel of the fair. According to Republican rhetoric, its very shape signified lift and promise, an ascension of human spirit. The construction—an elaborate system of individual but interdependent parts—was an expression of democratic social vision. Not only was it realized through the cooperation of individual workers (and the mutual effort of labor and capital, according to the propaganda), but it functioned as a visual metaphor for that process. Ultimately, the tower was a symbol that visitors could visit and climb.

One visitor was the artist Henri Rivière, who took startling snapshots from atop and within the monument (FIG. 7.4) while it was under construction.³ These photographs remind us that the tower was also a vertiginous urban folly capable of provoking an unprecedented physical sensation, something like moored flight. Rivière's vision further allows us to appreciate that the tower was a paradox: a grand and fiercely complex exercise in the practical advances of high technology that was, by design, utterly functionless. The open competition sponsored by the exposition planning committee had

originally called for an “iron tower of 300 meters in height.” According to Adolphe Alphand, director of public works for the city of Paris, the tower should be an “original masterpiece of metallic engineering.”⁴ Many submissions for the tower competition fitted the ironwork with columns, arcades, and balconies or cloaked the base in masonry, grounding the monument in stolid grand mannerisms adapted from the beaux-arts tradition. Eugène Hénard even produced an exotic Indian design in which the tower would be supported on the backs of elephants.

Only the plans submitted by the Maison Eiffel met Alphand's standard. Developed by two engineers and an architect working under Eiffel, the tower is both bombastic and spare, a monument to the technology of its own making. In order to fulfill its role as a symbol of Republican promise, the finished work had to express nothing more nor less than the sum of its 18,038 standardized parts. All but purged of historicizing form, the style of the Eiffel Tower was shaped by the conceit of stylelessness.

An anomaly among its competitors, Eiffel's tower was as much a testimony to the ambivalence of the new age as it was an emissary of rationalism and advance. Moreover, its success as a symbol was further attenuated by a hostile public and press, which included such distinguished members of the arts-and-letters establishment as Ernest Meissonier, Charles Garnier (architect of the new Opéra; see figure 6.66), William Bouguereau, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Guy de Maupassant, and J.-K. Huysmans. Eiffel's tower was decried as a useless monstrosity, an act of empty vandalism that would cast its withering shadow on the great monuments of Paris. Eiffel made some effort to defend it against such charges, explaining that the upper platform would be used for observations in meteorology and physics (though no such operations ever actually vindicated the tower's size). Although it became a popular fixture after the exposition, the tower was originally an object of ridicule. Referred to as a Tower of Babel, it was also compared to an obelisk, a lighthouse, and a lamppost—anything tall and pointy. These insults more aptly describe the commercial tie-ins produced by the Société Nouvelle d'Exploitation de la Tour Eiffel, which reduced the mighty pylon to a bibelot with a clock in its belly or a birdcage on its head.



7.3
Gustave Eiffel (1832–1923)
Construction of the
Eiffel Tower, August 1888

The life of the Eiffel Tower in the public imagination is significant because it represents a confluence of practicality and symbolism that recurred throughout the aesthetic history of Paris during the Belle Époque. The correlation between science and style is another such confluence, which can be observed in painting of the period. Throughout the late 1880s, Neo-Impressionist painters such as Georges Seurat and Paul Signac had been adapting principles of optical theory from the writings of Charles Blanc, Eugène Chevreul, Charles Henry, and others.⁵ By substituting the juxtaposition of tiny units of pure color for the conventional mixing of pigments on the palette, they achieved a rare luminosity. Applying the laws of complementary and contrasting color, of reflected light and halation, permitted Seurat and his Neo-Impressionist brethren to attain myriad tonal and chromatic nuances. In this way, the fleeting pictorial effects of Impressionism were reconceived as elements of a system and thereby imbued with the durability of a higher truth.

The twentieth-century art historian Meyer Schapiro was the first to characterize Seurat's technique as that of a painter-engineer, comparing his Divisionist method to the technology of the Eiffel Tower.⁶ Indeed, both join many uniform elements to create an articulated whole, an open form that is at once monumental and immaterially light. Seurat had depicted the tower before it was finished, painting it on a very small scale (FIG. 7.5). The work is surely a sketch, but its small dimensions permit the comparatively large points of color to function less as the optical equivalent of form-describing light (the reds and yellows actually document the original colors of the tower, which was polychrome) than as the component parts of a constructive procedure. Dense at the base, Seurat's tower grows increasingly delicate with height, merging at its unfinished apex with empty space, a luminous field that is also composed of dots. Here lies the poetry of this modest work, the ascent of the material into an ethereal realm. More than just a display of rationalized technique, Seurat's method exposed the poignant ambiguities that rational systems often inadvertently express.

Like the Eiffel Tower, Neo-Impressionist pictures appear to reflect a new faith in science and technology but actually embody the contradictions inherent in that faith. Figuration, for one, is deliberately archaic (Seurat



claimed to be imbuing modern figures with the processional rhythms of the Panathenaic frieze,⁷ though this quality of his work owes as much to the schematic classicism of Pierre Puvis de Chavannes). Further, the dots are much less regular in size than they first appear to be and are deployed over a layer of paint that is more broadly applied. The critic Félix Fénéon, an ardent advocate for the Neo-Impressionist cause, warned that optical theory could be mistaken for a formula, which would be useless in the hands of anything less than a gifted painter⁸; even Signac, Seurat's closest colleague, expressed a certain frustration with the Divisionist method.

Fénéon was fond of masking ironic humor with a deadpan or "rational" manner of speech, making it difficult to distinguish genuine theory from pseudo-science or mystification in some of his articles on Seurat and Signac. Signac's portrait of him (FIG. 7.6) is revealing. The full title connotes a certain dry seriousness: *Opus 217. Against the Enamel of a Background Rhythmic with*

7.4

Henri Rivière
(1864–1951)

*The Painter on the
Eiffel Tower, 1900*

Lithograph,
20³/₄ x 32⁷/₁₆ in. (52.8 x
82.4 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



7.5 (above)
Georges Seurat
(1859–1891)
Eiffel Tower, c. 1889
Oil on wood panel,
9½ x 6 in. (24 x 15.2 cm)
The Fine Arts Museums of
San Francisco; William
H. Noble Bequest Fund

7.6 (opposite)
Paul Signac (1863–1935)
*Opus 217. Against the
Enamel of a Background
Rhythmic with Beats and
Angles, Tones and Tints.
Portrait of M. Félix
Fénéon in 1890*, 1890
Oil on canvas, 29 x
36½ in. (73.5 x 92.5 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; fractional
gift of David and Peggy
Rockefeller

Beats and Angles, Tones and Tints, Portrait of M. Félix Fénéon in 1890. Signac appears to apply here specific optical principles established by Charles Henry, whose science of visual sensation was based on the putative neurophysiological effects of color and line. The pinwheel background, for example, was adapted from a Japanese print of textile designs, but the colors are arranged according to Henry's laws of rhythmic opposition. However, beneath the straightfaced Divisionist technique, the portrait is a dazzling, even absurdly garish, display. Flashy and vaguely comic, it was obviously conceived as a showpiece and a manifesto, but it succeeds instead as a personal work in which reverence gives way to affection and spoof. If Signac was gently mocking Fénéon's pretensions, he also mocked his own.

The comic element in this and some other Neo-Impressionist figural work suggests a peculiar correspondence between science and wit. Henry's theories, in particular, are both formulaic and unprovable, sometimes reading like a parody. Seurat and Signac certainly recognized this rapport between science and the absurd. In the case of Seurat's *Chahut* (FIG. 7.7),

theories of color and line were applied for purposes of optical effect as well as sly caricature. *Chahut* depicts a troupe of popular entertainers on the shallow, gaslit stage of a *café-concert*, performing the dance for which the picture is named—a rowdy and indecent display noted above all for the exhibitionism of the *grand-écart*, or standing split.⁹ The *chahut* is a remarkable subject for Seurat, his first effort at portraying extreme action. In a strange effect, the work manages to be both dynamic and hieratic, resembling no other picture of its time; its true counterpart is the Eiffel Tower.

When Seurat's canvas was exhibited at the Salon of the Société des Artistes Indépendants in 1890, insiders and informed critics recognized the artist's allusion to Henry's theories of linear expression, according to which lines are capable of conveying mood. They can be agreeable or disagreeable, for example, due to their influence on instinctive internal rhythms. The premise, as carried out in *Chahut*, was that diagonal lines angled above the horizontal—arms and legs, as well as facial features, ribbons, bows, and hair—express “gaiety” (conversely, those tilted downward would incite sadness). While Seurat's interest in this sort of thing has been overstated in the past, his style does reflect a partial adherence to Henry's schematic signs, and the formulaic precision in *Chahut* creates a parodic impression.

Writers at the end of the century described the *café-concert* as a spectacle of jaded artifice, and some read this sentiment in Seurat's picture. Jean-Claude Lebensztejn has suggested that, in contrast to celebrity performers (the sort who were soon to be portrayed by Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec), Seurat's automatons are “functionaries of the dance,” anonymous professionals whose mechanical performances represent the somewhat debased, touristic version of nightlife that prevailed in Montmartre.¹⁰ The artist also borrowed elements of his frenetic pantomime from contemporary posters by Jules Chéret, whose figures epitomized the delirious mirth that was being mass-produced by the entertainment industry. Seurat prized the energy of Chéret's work but mechanized it, dramatizing the ironic duality of the commercial idiom—its immediacy and its capacity for limitless replication.

For some members of the Neo-Impressionist circle, the new style was politically charged. In addition to Fénéon, painters such as Signac, Charles Angrand,

Henri-Edmond Cross, Maximilien Luce, and both Camille and Lucien Pissarro were active in the anarchist community, a radical sociopolitical movement rooted in underclass discontent that had also attracted many adherents among the intellectual elite.¹¹ Anarchist idealism was divided into two visionary extremes: communist utopianism and the supreme freedom of autonomous individual will (the latter appealed to aesthetes as a rationale for flamboyant personal style). Anarchism's utopian mythologies were embodied in nostalgic dreams of a classless golden age, a preindustrial vision of pros-

perous social harmony and arcadian repose. Conversely, anarchist individualism was most infamously incarnated by figures such as Ravachol, scourges of bourgeois social order who were devoted to "propaganda through deed": bombs were set off at the Palais-Bourbon and the Café Terminus in the Gare Saint-Lazare, as well as many other public and symbolic sites. In June 1894 Sadi Carnot, president of the Republic, was assassinated by an Italian anarchist in Lyons, France. These and other attacks triggered a quasi-martial suppression of anarchist activity during the early 1890s.





It remains difficult to extract an anarchist agenda from Neo-Impressionist painting, a style that lent itself as much to scene painting as to representing the dreams and realities of the underclass. However, Signac actively campaigned for an art premised on anarchist precepts of political reform, attempting to equate elements both of science and of archaic idealization with Puvis-like visions of an idyllic future. Many later Neo-Impressionist paintings, including works by Signac, would be given over to sun-filled images of agrarian labor that loosely correspond to the communist-anarchist ideal of social harmony—a coming golden age tied to the bounty of the land.

More specifically, Signac, Luce, and the Pissarro (father and son) wrote tracts and created illustrations for prominent anarchist reviews in Paris such as *Les Temps*

nouveaux, *Le Père Peinard*, and *La Révolte*. The appearance of the Eiffel Tower on the cover of Camille Pissarro's *Turpitudes sociales* (FIG. 7.9), a portfolio of drawings on anarchist themes, recalls the symbolic significance of the tower—and indicates how that symbol could be hijacked by any cause. Some anarchists did extoll the tower as an icon of positivist faith, even as others attacked it for being a monument to capitalist exploitation of the working class. In Pissarro's picture, Father Time greets the dawning of the anarchist age, a rising sun that dominates the colossus of the Exposition Universelle.

Although Pissarro retained his political philosophy, he gradually abandoned the Neo-Impressionist technique. In his many views of Paris painted between 1893 and 1903, the artist revitalized his Impressionist manner. The urban boulevard—the very corridor of

7.7 (opposite)

Georges Seurat
(1859–1891)

Le Chahut, c. 1889–90

Oil on canvas, 67½ x
55¼ in. (171.5 x 140.5 cm)
Kröller-Müller Museum,
Otterlo, Netherlands



7.8

Camille Pissarro
(1830–1903)

*Boulevard Montmartre:
Night*, 1897

Oil on canvas, 21⅙ x
25⅞ in. (53.5 x 65 cm)
National Gallery, London

7.9

Camille Pissarro
(1830–1903)

Anarchie, 1889, cover
for *Turpitudes sociales*,
unpublished album
of 28 drawings, 1889–90

Pencil and brown ink on
paper, 12¼ x 9⅞ in.

(31.5 x 24.5 cm)

Daniel Skira Collection,
Geneva

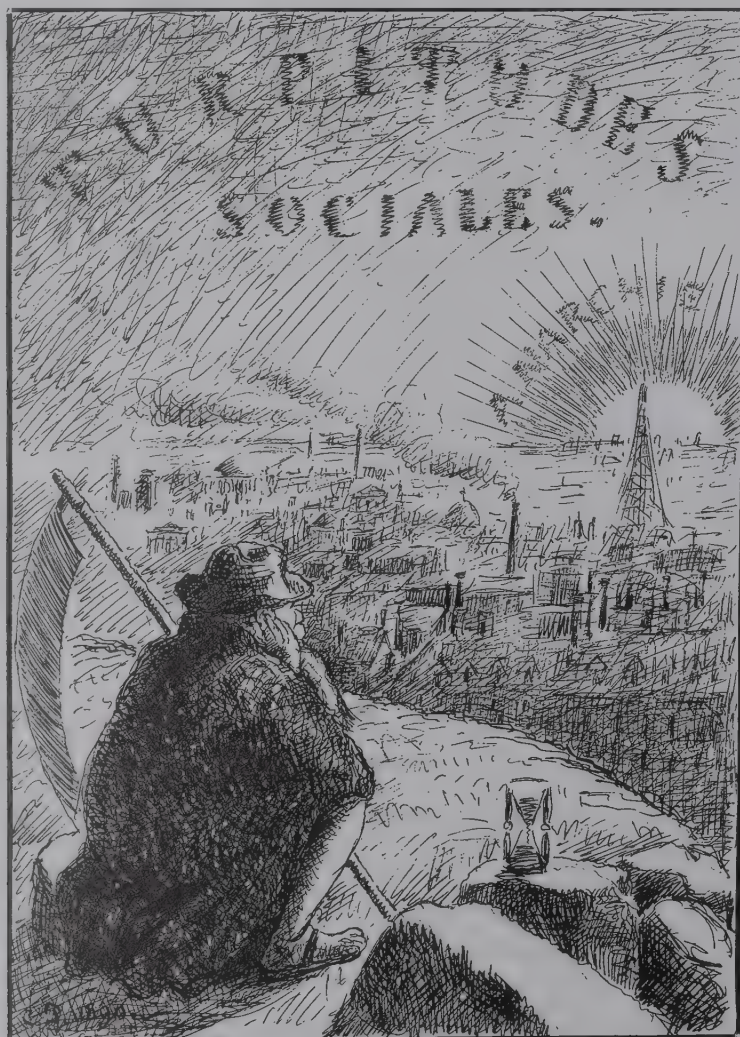
venture capitalism—would seem to be a subject ideally suited to Pissarro's anarchist agenda, yet it is impossible to maintain that these works encode the anarchist's experience of post-Haussmannian Paris as a place of oppression or ennui.¹² Only the perpetually debt-ridden artist's own marketing strategy (he was guided in his choice of Impressionist-revival subjects by his dealer, Bernheim-Jeune) reflects a certain cynicism. The plunging *Boulevard Montmartre: Night* (FIG. 7.8) is Pissarro's most original contribution to this genre, more for its formal effects—the gaslit night was then a relatively new subject—than its distopian air.

The eccentric shape of the Eiffel Tower at first kept most painters from including it in their work, and its gradual appearance is noteworthy. Henri Rousseau included the tower in the background of his self-portrait,

Myself: Portrait-Landscape (FIG. 7.10) (it can be glimpsed to the left of the boat's mast). The artist, who was sixteen years older than Seurat, was a complex anomaly. As this self-portrait (which hung at the Salon des Indépendants in 1890) reveals, Rousseau's work belongs to no group's style. In fact, Rousseau was a largely self-taught painter whose professed models were academics such as Bouguereau and Gérôme rather than the "advanced" members of the Indépendants. A customs inspector for the municipal toll service (a *gabelou*, though this has been mistakenly converted for posterity into the higher rank of *douanier*), Rousseau retired during the mid-1880s in order to devote more time to his art, pursuing and promoting it tirelessly until his death in 1910. He lived most of this period in the run-down quarter of Plaisance, south of Montparnasse.

Throughout his life, and ever since, artists, critics, and historians have struggled to define Rousseau's identity. The works are carefully executed in a sincere but flat-footed imitation of academic finish; according to the standards by which Rousseau judged his work to be a success, they appear naive. Almost despite himself, however, Rousseau achieved a startling (if inconsistent) mastery of pure form, and for this he was appreciated by various members of the avant-garde and would eventually be hailed by Pablo Picasso and his circle as an important precursor of modern style. Was he a *primitif* of genius or a deliberate stylist? The question is impossible to resolve, but this ambiguity lies at the heart of Rousseau's modernity. During a period when the brittle perfectionism of the academic manner was beginning to show signs of fatigue, Rousseau's unschooled adaptation gave it new life. Not unlike Seurat, whose pictures have been likened to his in their hieratic calm, Rousseau revealed systematic method to be a source of ineffable mystery as well as unexpected wit and charm. This flexibility allowed his work to succeed formally yet also suggest a parody of its own ambitions. The Eiffel Tower, which Rousseau included in a number of works, seems an apt emblem for his œuvre.

Unlike most academicians of his day, and much like many modernists to come, Rousseau was infatuated with new technology. In addition to the tower, dirigibles and airplanes often populate his sky. Rousseau was also a true painter of Paris, though the places that he depicted are often marginal. His duty for the toll service





7.10

Henri Rousseau
(1844-1910)

*Myself: Portrait-
Landscape, 1890*

Oil on canvas, 57½ x
44½ in. (146 x 113 cm)

National Gallery, Prague



7.11

Joseph-Antoine Bouvard
(1840–1920)
Dôme Central,
Exposition Universelle,
1889

had taken him on long walks through the city, from the quays and parks to the edge of town and out into the suburbs. It is fitting, then, that he portrayed himself along the Seine. The self-portrait is large and complex. In its formality, it represents Rousseau's bid for official recognition, and he is dressed for the occasion in a suit and beret, the costume of the professional *artiste-peintre*.¹³ Thanks to an inadequate shadow at his feet, the artist appears to be levitating—his physical being, like that of the tower, simultaneously conveys a heaviness and a sense of lift.

Rousseau's distant tower is the first premonition in painting of its celebrated omnipresence. In its great height and girth, the tower also connotes the vastness of the Exposition Universelle. Spanning portions of the Left and Right Banks, the fair occupied some 240 acres (incorporating a bridge, the Pont d'Iéna), on three principal sites: the Champ-de-Mars, the Esplanade des Invalides,

and the Parc du Trocadéro (the traditional site of world's fairs in Paris). Large exhibition halls—iron-and-glass “palaces”—devoted to Agriculture, Horticulture, Industry, the Liberal Arts (education), and the Beaux-Arts were surmounted by cupolas of turquoise enamel and gold and faced with a polychrome profusion of bricks and tiles. Encrusted with decoration, J.-A. Bouvard's symbolic Dôme Central (FIG. 7.11) reveals through contrast the technological purity of the tower. The Dome was the resplendent entrance to a grandiose exhibition-hall complex devoted to industry, science, and the fine arts. On its exterior, iron and glass support an eruption of ornamental reliefs and allegorical sculpture representing French dominion over art and science.

Only one structure rivaled the tower as iron architecture on a sublime scale. Ferdinand Dutert's Galerie des Machines (FIG. 7.13), also sited on the Champ-de-Mars, was the tower's vast horizontal counterpart; together,

they were the steeple and transept in a secular cathedral of industrial faith.¹⁴ The central space of the Galerie, a yawning shed divided into two levels and flanked by two lateral galleries, was shaped by a skeletal iron frame formed by a succession of ogival arches or ribs. The interior was an astonishing 1,378 feet (420 meters) in length, with no interrupting support. The effect was overwhelming; photographs from the period show that the Galerie was as vertiginous in its way as the Eiffel Tower. The iron frame was fitted with glass, creating a lofty, light-filled impression of boundless expanse, what Huysmans characterized (in the spirit of his description of the Eiffel Tower) as a “formidable void.”¹⁵ Given the fairground setting, some decoration of the façade and ceiling was inevitable, but it was kept to a minimum. Extolled chiefly for exploiting the inherent elegance and elasticity of iron on a grand scale, the Galerie came to be seen as an outmoded and unmaintainable waste of space, and it was torn down in 1909.¹⁶

As much an amusement park as a grand spectacle of national pride, the exposition reached through historical time and international space. In addition to the large halls, a vast number of smaller pavilions transformed the fair into a megalopolis of theme parks, where education was disguised as entertainment and strollers could take a walking tour of the world. Among the attractions was a reconstruction of the Bastille (befitting the centennial of the Revolution), outfitted with rides, restaurants, boutiques, and costume pageants of eighteenth-century street life.¹⁷ Foreign cultures were represented on the Esplanade des Invalides by architectural pastiches of indigenous styles. Chinese, Aztec, and Indian temples, Turkish minarets, and dozens of other pavilions and kiosks symbolizing the countries of Europe, South America, and Asia were confected from an anachronistic variety of “authentic” ancient and modern prototypes. Especially popular was the rue de Caire, an Egyptian street re-created to satisfy the tourist’s perception of other cultures as picturesque. Administered by the baron Delort de Gléon, a collector of Islamic art, the street incorporated bits and pieces from demolished sites in Egypt, and it was populated by 160 Egyptians, including merchants, artisans, and entertainers. In addition to pavilions such as the Palais d’Annam et du Tonkin and the Pagode d’Angkor (FIG. 7.12), which coincidentally resembled an exotic version of the Eiffel Tower,



7.12
Albert-Maurice Fabre
Cambodia Pavilion with
the Pagode d’Angkor,
Exposition Universelle,
1889



7.13
Ferdinand Dutert
(1845–1906)
Interior of the Galerie
des Machines,
Exposition Universelle,
1889

this section of the fair also contained reconstructed villages from New Caledonia, Tahiti, Java, Senegal, and other French colonies. Each was strewn with tribal objects and inhabited by imported natives in local dress. Belly dancing, inspired by the rue du Caire, became a libidinous sensation in Paris music halls; dancers and musicians from Java thrilled the romantic sensibilities of Paul Gauguin and Claude Debussy.

Exotic architecture was also simulated in a more abstract fashion for the exhibit *Histoire de l'Habitation Humaine*, which was designed by Charles Garnier (who served as architectural adviser to the exposition).¹⁸ Sited near the Eiffel Tower, it comprised some thirty structures assembled side by side in a chronological survey of domestic architecture, beginning with cave dwellings and grass huts. A "prehistoric" period incorporated both natural and artificial shelters; a "historic" period encompassed antiquity through the Renaissance; and a racially determined category of "others" was devoted to what the French called *civilizations isolées*, which were categorized by skin color: the "yellow race" (Japanese, Chinese, Eskimos), the "black race" from equatorial Africa, and the "redskin" Aztecs and Incas of America. The display was crowded and hastily constructed, with a few buildings consisting of little more than propped-up façades, although some interiors were appointed with "characteristic" decor and a costumed local.

The fairground was a land of displacement, where lofty monuments to science and technology kept company with exotic historicism. In its prejudices, especially its intermingling of science and ethnography, the 1889 exposition embodied a cultural ambivalence between archaism and progress. In painting, for example, it is tempting to oppose the scientific manner of Neo-Impressionism to the so-called primitivism of a painter such as Gauguin. His portrait of his friend and supporter Emile Schuffenecker with his family (FIG. 7.14), one of Gauguin's few major paintings done in Paris in this period, shares a "primitive" approach to the figures, as well as a psychological distancing between near and far figures (here used to ironic effect), with such celebrated works as his 1888 *Vision after the Sermon* (The National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh). In fact, both Neo-Impressionism and primitivism reflect an idealistic or conceptual approach to representation that would supersede the vagaries of mere visual appearance.

7.14

Paul Gauguin
(1848–1903)

Schuffenecker's Family,
1889

Oil on canvas, 28¾ x
36¼ in. (73 x 92 cm)
Musée d'Orsay





SYMBOLISM AND THE POST-IMPRESSIONIST RETREAT

The term *Symbolism* describes many things and was more often applied to poetry than to art. As a result, the best definitions come from poets, though they are far from consistent. For Jean Moréas in 1886, Symbolism represented an attempt “to clothe the Idea in perceptible form.”

Stéphane Mallarmé’s prescription from 1891 is more obscure: “To name an object is to suppress three-quarters of the pleasure in the poem, which stems from the joy of divining little by little; to suggest, there is the dream. It is the perfect use of this mystery which constitutes the symbol.”¹⁹ Symbolism was an international movement, although Paris was its acknowledged capital. Broadly defined, the Symbolist community in Paris of the 1880s and 1890s was an inclusive intellec-

tual forum, but it was often divided into small, short-lived subgroups whose aesthetic allegiances could shift from week to week. Many of these were represented by slim periodicals that published new poetry and criticism.²⁰ Work by writers and editors such as Fénéon, Moréas, Mallarmé, Paul Adam, Rémy de Gourmont, Gustave Kahn, Jules Laforgue, Charles Morice, and dozens of others was disseminated in little magazines: *La Revue indépendante*, *La Revue Wagnerienne*, *La Revue moderniste*, *La Plume*, *L’Ermitage*, *La Renaissance*, *La Vogue*. The most ephemeral of all was named *La Symboliste* and was published for just four weeks in 1886 by Adam, Kahn, Laforgue, and Moréas; the most durable was the *Mercure de France*; perhaps the most lavish was *La Revue blanche*, published between 1893 and 1903 by the Natanson brothers. Adherents congregated in Paris cafés, where one was both “chez soi” and “chez tout le monde.”²¹ The largest and most important Symbolist soirées, attended by Gauguin when he was in Paris, were held on Monday nights at the Café Voltaire, located on the Left Bank’s place de l’Odéon.

We owe our appreciation of Symbolism in Gauguin’s work to the critic Georges-Albert Aurier, whose article “Le Symbolisme en peinture: Paul Gauguin” was published by the *Mercure de France* in March 1891. Aurier described paintings like Gauguin’s *Vision after the Sermon* as embodying an idea in subjective pictorial form, what he referred to as a “sign.” In this way, natural appearances were abandoned for an art that was *idéiste*, both conceptual and elemental, a quality that Aurier implicitly likened to the allusive rather than descriptive language of Symbolist poetry. In Gauguin, simplified form, figural distortions, hieratic composition, and broad, flat areas of pure color were all understood to function allusively. Like the Divisionist technique of Neo-Impressionism, this approach was meant to banish the inherited conventions of academic naturalism in favor of a reductivist language, something essential or pure. Crucially, however, in Gauguin’s work these properties were linked to a search for style beyond the confines of Western tradition, for a “natural” or premodern visual language of symbolic form.²²

Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh, and Paul Cézanne are three figures whose contribution to the art of Paris at the end of the century was partly defined as a retreat from the city. In Gauguin’s case, the city was spurned



7.15

Paul Gauguin
(1848–1903)

*Delightful Land (Nave
Nave Fenua)*, from
Noa Noa, c. 1893–95

Woodcut, 14³/₁₆ x 8 in.
(35.4 x 20.1 cm)

The Art Institute of
Chicago; Clarence
Buckingham Collection



for places of folkloric culture and raw or luxuriant natural beauty, most notably Brittany, in the north of France, and Polynesia. By 1891 Gauguin had long been expressing his disaffection with Paris by claiming a deep aversion to the social, political, and moral corruption of fin de siècle French society, although his malaise was also privately fueled by a spiritual restlessness (abandoning the bourgeois responsibility of his wife and five children was a gesture that apparently served both impulses). Practically, Gauguin was also discouraged by the reception of his work in Paris, beginning with the failure of a group show he organized at the 1889 Exposition Universelle. Devoted to paintings by the Impressionist and Synthetist group—artists in his circle who were denied access to the official Palais des Beaux-Arts—it took place at the Café Volpini, which was located on the fairgrounds.

Aurier's article was written in conjunction with a

large sale of Gauguin's work in February 1891 at the Hôtel Drouot auction house, from which the artist hoped to earn enough money to finance a long sojourn in the South Seas. The sale was a surprise success, providing Gauguin with enough funds to travel and stimulating discussion of his work within the Symbolist community. Response was mixed, but Gauguin succeeded in attracting disciples among the younger painters. On March 23 forty guests attended Gauguin's send-off banquet at the Café Voltaire; on April 4 he left for Tahiti, via Marseilles, from the Gare de Lyon.

Of course, Gauguin's primitivism (like all primitivisms) was a construction loaded with biases and contradictions.²³ The Breton village of Pont-Aven and the island of Papeete did not represent the survival of precivilized cultures so much as mere vestiges of those cultures in a modernized setting infiltrated by tourism and colonialism. The artist clearly approached the

7.16

Paul Gauguin
(1848–1903)

Day of the God
(*Mahana No Atua*),
1894

Oil (possibly mixed
with wax) on canvas,
26⁷/₈ x 36 in.

(68.3 x 91.5 cm)

The Art Institute
of Chicago; Helen
Birch-Bartlett Memorial
Collection

South Pacific with a sense of entitlement that was both colonialist and sexist, pursuing an erotic as well as exotic call (many of Gauguin's pictures from Tahiti depict his fourteen-year-old mistress, Tehamana). He would later describe the Polynesian mystique as "un certain luxe barbare d'autrefois" (a certain long-lost barbaric luxuriousness); this notion captures the savage but intoxicating mystery of Gauguin's South Pacific, permeated with lush colors, rich scents, pantheistic superstition, and sex. The pictures are also imbued with nostalgia, a muted overlay of the archaeological on the modern that adds poignancy to the archaic dignity of his Tahitian figures—a sentiment of paradise lost that corresponds to other contemporary accounts of Polynesia and its fate in western hands. Above all, Gauguin's primitivism was a syncretic idiom, in which many ancient and modern traditions—Japanese, Egyptian, and Polynesian as well as archaic and "popular" forms of Western art—were searched for precepts of composition and design that might challenge the biases of representational art.

The contradictions in Gauguin's œuvre make it provocative and complex. In addition to the paintings, his work in other media, including carved-wood sculpture and ceramic pottery, idiosyncratically corresponds to period developments in the decorative arts—the craft-reform movement referred to as Art Nouveau. On his return to Paris in 1893, the artist again sought to expose his work within the Symbolist community, most notably through his writings about Tahiti such as *Noa Noa*, which he originally planned to illustrate with woodblock prints (FIG. 7.15). Both sumptuous and deliberately raw, these prints also relate to a contemporaneous interest in folkloric and medieval printmaking, a phenomenon that spawned its own periodical, the short-lived *L'Ymagier*, published by Alfred Jarry and Gourmont in 1895–96.²⁴

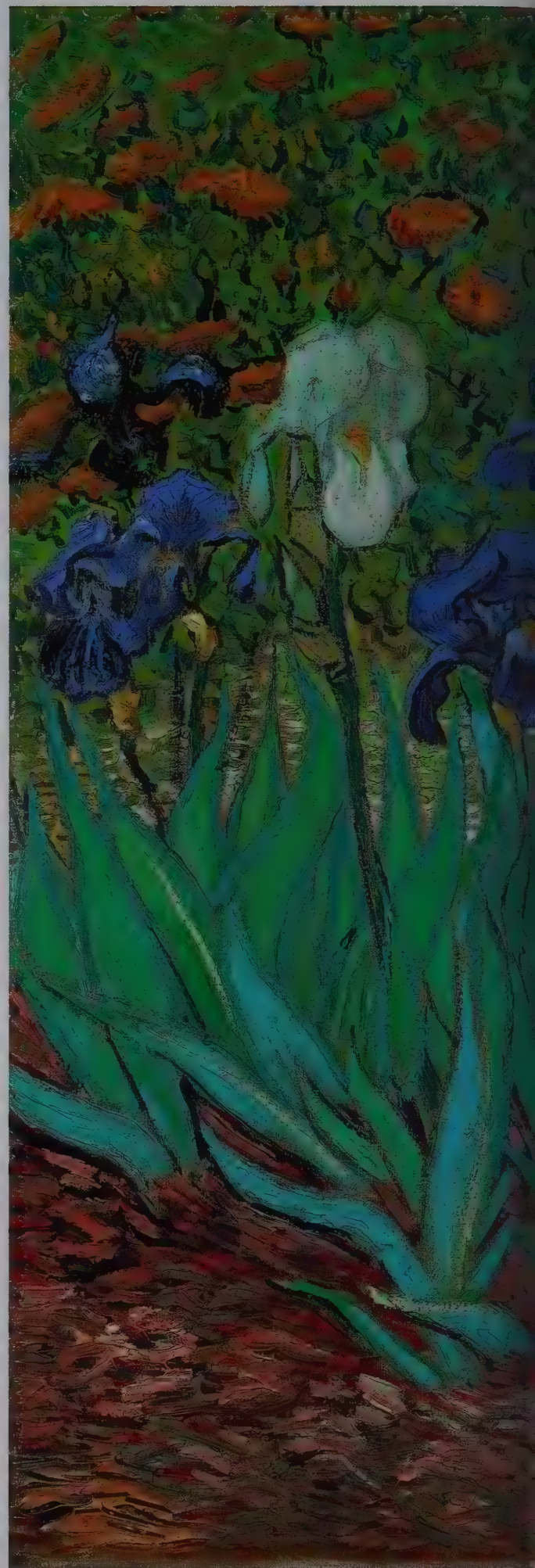
During this Parisian hiatus, 1893–95, Gauguin produced only a handful of paintings, including the small but conceptually monumental *Mahana No Atua* (FIG. 7.16), a kind of summation of the iconography of his Tahitian paintings. Much of Gauguin's energy was devoted to transforming his studio on the rue Vercingétorix into an elaborate showroom environment, exhibiting his work alongside ethnographic artifacts against green and yellow walls. An exotic version of the

7.17

Vincent van Gogh
(1853–1890)

Irises, 1889

Oil on canvas, 27 ¹⁵/₁₆ x
36 ¹/₁₆ in. (71 x 93 cm)
J. Paul Getty Museum,
Los Angeles







7.18

Louis Anquetin
(1861–1932)

*The Pont des Saints-
Pères: Gust of Wind*,
1889

Oil on canvas, 47 x
49 5/8 in. (119.5 x 126 cm)
Kunsthalle Bremen,
Germany

contemporary Art Nouveau interior, it also presaged the role of the studio in art of the pre–World War I period. In the fall of 1893 Gauguin exhibited some four dozen Tahitian canvases at the Galerie Durand-Ruel; he had hoped to attract a new public to his work in this studio setting but ultimately failed to generate any significant income this way. He left France for the last time in July 1895.

Van Gogh might be said to have found in nature what Gauguin dreamed of discovering in premodern culture—the primal self. His retreat from Paris in

1888, primarily to Arles in the south of France, closely corresponds to Gauguin's flight (the two spent time together in Arles, where van Gogh hoped to establish an artist's colony). Originally self-taught, van Gogh valued the vigorous naturalism of his own work, which he associated with the countryside and its people. But like Gauguin, he absorbed the folkish nature of his chosen subjects through a sophisticated aesthetic filter, drawing on the advice of other artists and a battery of eclectic sources: seventeenth-century Dutch genre painting (the artist himself was Dutch); the colorism and writhing

line of Eugène Delacroix; the archaism of Puvis de Chavannes; the compositional devices of Japanese print-makers. Van Gogh referred to Arles as “the equivalent of Japan in the *midi*,”²⁵ and he approached the landscape there as a living substitute for the Japanese print. In a remarkable formulation that is as complex as Gauguin’s syncretic approach, he described “exaggerating” drawing and color like a Japanese printmaker in order to capture not only the appearance of the Provençal countryside but also the “style” of the landscape.

Back in Paris, van Gogh’s synthesis of artifice and empiricism was appreciated by a small circle of admirers. His pictures were privately shown to members of the avant-garde by his brother Théo, who worked for the gallery Goupil, Boussod & Valadon (where he received shipments of Vincent’s work from the south), and by Père Tanguy, a dealer from whom many young artists bought their supplies. Vincent (he signed his canvases with his first name alone) also exhibited works at the Salon des Indépendants, including the great *Irises* (FIG. 7.17).

In an essay entitled “Les Isolés: Vincent van Gogh,” published in January 1890 in the *Mercure de France*, Aurier seized works such as this for the Symbolists, much as he would do with Gauguin. Aurier, who is largely responsible for the legend of van Gogh, described the artist’s style as a function of temperament and characterized him as a man of disturbed genius. He identified van Gogh as a primitive outsider, a “hyperes-there who perceives with abnormal and possibly even painful intensity the imperceptible and secret character of lines and forms, and even more of colors, of light, of the magic iridescence of shadows, of nuances which are invisible to healthy eyes.”²⁶ Aurier clearly connected the visionary quality of van Gogh’s work to the artist’s unstable physical and emotional condition, representing him as a voice. After the artist’s death, many admirers continued to link his genius to his alienation and emotional conflict—just as these qualities would be used by his detractors, during a wave of prewar neoclassicism on the Paris art scene, to situate van Gogh’s work outside French tradition. So prevalent was this “outsider” aspect of van Gogh’s reputation and its implication of a strictly intuitive manner that Emile Bernard, his greatest advocate among young French painters, was moved to claim instead that van Gogh’s churning style was a

brilliant and calculated effect.²⁷ Vincent himself had responded to the aesthetic implications of Aurier’s argument, which suggested to him that painting could be a “music of tones with color.” But he ultimately rejected Aurier’s theory, claiming that he would rather try to grasp a more tangible truth: “I would still rather be a shoemaker than a musician in colors,” he wrote to his brother.²⁸

It was the colorism of van Gogh and Gauguin that would make the deepest impression on painters in Paris during the prewar period, but in the late 1880s it was the reductive nature of their work that was being adapted by younger Post-Impressionists to a decorative urban mode. Characterized by flat colors and contour lines, this idiom was dubbed *cloisonnisme* by the critic Edouard Dujardin (because of its resemblance to medieval *cloisonné* enamel), who described it as a form of Symbolism that reduced visual appearance to a silhouette—what he referred to as a quasi-abstract “sign.” Dujardin was speaking in particular of the painter Louis Anquetin, whose *Pont des Saints-Pères: Gust of Wind* (FIG. 7.18), which was exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants in 1891, is a masterpiece in this style. It shows an eastward view from the Pont du Carrousel animated by a gust of wind, a popular decorative device in fin de siècle street scenes. In the background the Île de la Cité, with the cathedral of Notre-Dame, rises over the Pont des Arts, an early-nineteenth-century precursor of ironwork engineering. Perhaps in keeping with his primitivist affinity for pre-Renaissance style, Anquetin literally turned his back on the newly completed Eiffel Tower (the top of which can be glimpsed from this bridge if one is looking west), concentrating instead on what might be loosely referred to as medieval Paris.

Gauguin, van Gogh, and Cézanne were all understood during their lifetimes to be eccentric masters. Of the three, however, Cézanne’s legacy is perhaps the least idiosyncratic. Given the pervasive impact of his work on disparate strains of new painting, it comes as something of a surprise to learn that he experienced the modernist community in Paris as an outsider. Temperamentally ill-suited to the city, Cézanne divided his time between the capital and France’s deep south. That distance from Paris heightened his quasi-mythic stature among young painters, who were only intermittently exposed to his work at various exhibitions,



although articles by Bernard, Gustave Geoffroy, Huysmans, and Morice, among others, generated debate. Above all, Cézanne came to be known as an artist of deep, almost obsessive commitment. This character trait also inspired his old friend Emile Zola, in the novel *L'Œuvre* (1886), to portray the artist as a mad painter ultimately incapable of realizing his own vision.

In the fall of 1895 Cézanne had his first one-man exhibition, at Ambroise Vollard's gallery on the rue Laffitte (Edgar Degas, Claude Monet, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir were among those who purchased pictures from the show), and it was primarily at Vollard's that young artists in Paris would see Cézanne's work in the coming years. *Portrait of Ambroise Vollard* (FIG. 7.19) was painted in 1899 in Cézanne's studio on the rue Hégésippe-Moreau, where Vollard later wrote that he endured 115 three-hour sittings, after which the artist

admitted that he was not displeased with his progress in rendering the dealer's shirt. The story is exaggerated, of course, but it corresponds to the multiple accounts of Cézanne's being lost in profound concentration for long intervals before the motif, as well as having been his own severest critic.

Most of Cézanne's landscapes and figures were painted in the south, but his portraits and still lifes can be more difficult to locate. *Still Life with Plaster Cast of Cupid* (FIG. 7.20), for example, may have been painted in Paris; it was, in any case, sold by Vollard in 1898. The composition is astonishingly dynamic: the objects appear to have been set in motion along orbital paths, as if propelled by the torsion of the plaster statuette. Cézanne's intense observation of nature was complemented by a search for almost abstract pictorial means with which to approximate and organize the

7.19 (opposite)

Paul Cézanne
(1839–1906)

*Portrait of Ambroise
Vollard*, 1899

Oil on canvas,
39 ⁷/₈ x 31 ⁷/₈ in.
(100 x 81 cm)
Petit Palais

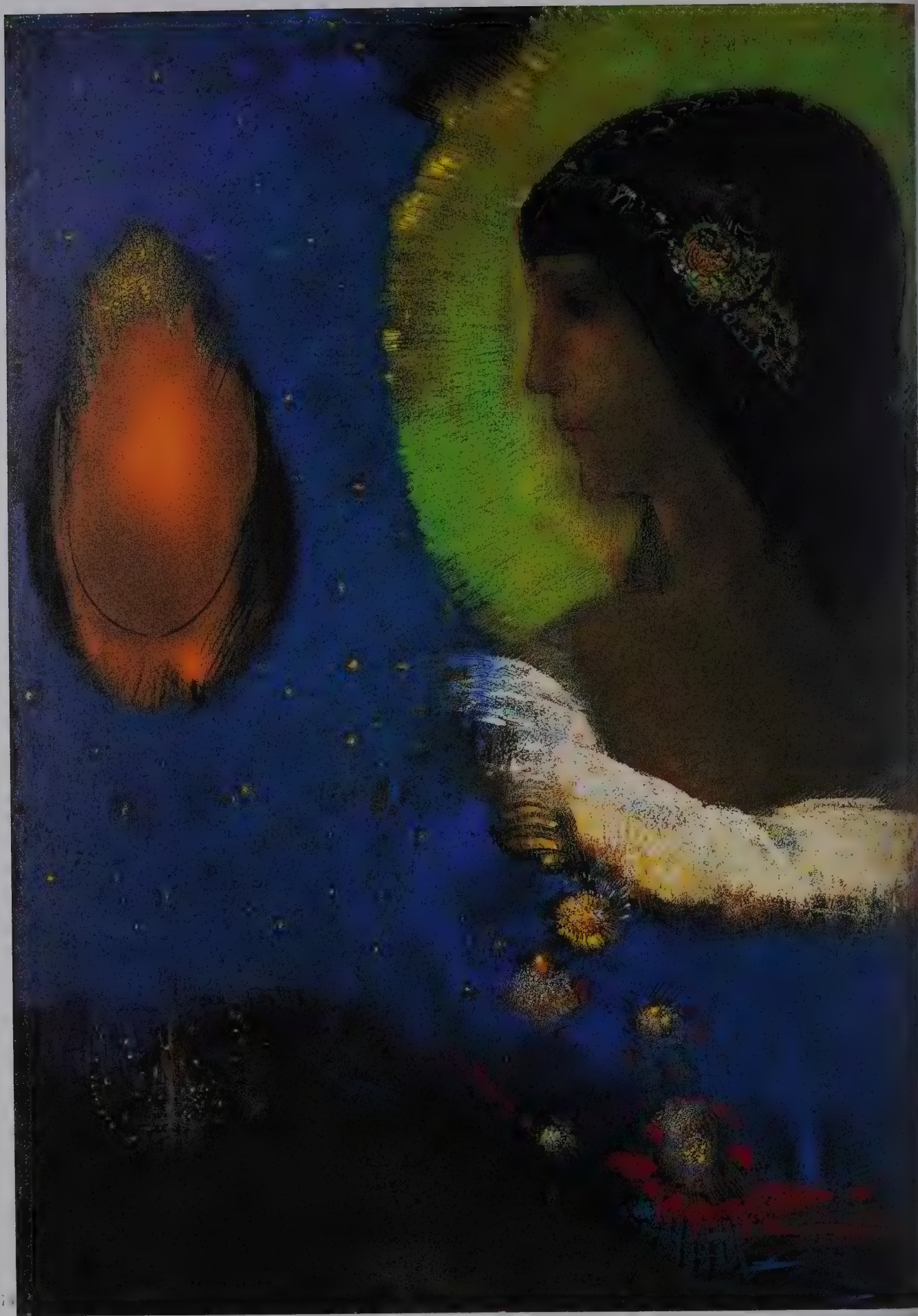


7.20

Paul Cézanne
(1839–1906)

*Still Life with Plaster
Cast of Cupid*, c. 1894

Oil on paper laid on
board, mounted on
wood, 27 ³/₄ x 22 ⁹/₁₆ in.
(70.6 x 57.3 cm)
The Courtauld Institute,
London; Courtauld
bequest, 1948



7.21

Odilon Redon
(1840-1916)

*Evocation, the
Hypnotized Woman,
Egg-Shaped and
Luminous Cell, Symbol
of the Origins, c. 1905*

Pastel and charcoal on
paper, 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{6}$ in.
(52 x 36 cm)

The Art Institute of
Chicago

visual sensations absorbed through his focused gaze. Rather than imitate appearances, he applied paint in discrete “constructive” strokes, juxtaposing unmodeled colors. The result could be balanced and distilled yet complexly ambiguous.

The enormous impact of Gauguin, van Gogh, and Cézanne on the art of Paris began within an initially small group of advocates—dealers, critics, and artists such as Bernard and Paul Sérusier, who visited Gauguin and Cézanne in their retreats and brought the teachings of the masters back to the city. Their legacy was interpreted and absorbed in a variety of ways. Cézanne, for example, shaped both Cubism and neoclassicism (schools of painting that were otherwise essentially opposed) during the prewar period, and his many paintings of bathers lie behind virtually every new idea about how to depict the female nude at that time. By then all three artists had already been recognized as modern masters, a status confirmed by landmark posthumous exhibitions of their work.

Van Gogh was the subject of several memorial tributes in 1891 and a large show at the Bernheim-Jeune gallery in 1901; Gauguin was given an exhibition of over seventy works at the Vollard gallery in November 1903, six months after his death on Papeete. Most significantly, both artists were honored with retrospectives at the Salon des Indépendants in, respectively, 1905 and 1906. In 1907, one year after Cézanne’s death, a retrospective of his work was held at the Salon d’Automne (preceded by an important exhibition of watercolors at the Bernheim-Jeune gallery). These were events that directly influenced the course of modern painting, including the development of Picasso and Henri Matisse, for whom Post-Impressionism would represent both a source and a challenge.

The Esoteric Image

In Paris, Post-Impressionist painting received wide attention through exhibitions and the critical press, exercising a tremendous impact on other artists. The art of Gauguin, Cézanne, and van Gogh was, however, a conspicuously antiurban—almost escapist—body of work (as opposed to Seurat’s Neo-Impressionism, which treated Parisian subjects and addressed urbanism as a

theme). Similarly, much of the Symbolist art that was produced in Paris also represented a form of escapism, with subjects that resemble nightmares and dreams. The city remained an essential setting for these works, however, which belong to the aesthetic tendency referred to as Decadence. In *Les Essais de psychologie contemporaine*, published in 1883, the critic and novelist Paul Bourget identified three elements that defined Decadence as a modern condition: “the end of religious faith, life in Paris, and the scientific spirit of the age.”²⁹ According to Bourget, the empty materialism of the

7.22

Odilon Redon
(1840–1916)

*Chimera: Head with Eyes
Closed, with Strange
Arabesques*, n.d.

Charcoal on buff paper,
21½ x 15⅞ in.
(54.5 x 39 cm)
Musée du Louvre



7.23

Edmond Aman-Jean
(1858–1936)

Béatrix, 1893

Lithograph, 43¼ x 28¾
in. (110.5 x 72.6 cm)

Musée Départemental
Maurice Denis, Saint-
Germain-en-Laye

industrial city had exerted a corrupting influence on modern culture, transforming urban life into one of physical enervation, social alienation, and spiritual emptiness. In response, Symbolist poets and artists cultivated personal aesthetic freedom and a darkling form of spirituality by retreating into the extreme recesses of the individual imagination, creating esoteric fantasies cloaked in the trappings of myth and religion.

Odilon Redon was by far the most important and original figure working in this genre—and was acknowledged as such by Aurier, Gauguin, and Huysmans as well as by the young artists of the Nabi circle. Redon's astonishing series of *Noirs* (lithographs and charcoal drawings of the 1870s and 1880s) explored an eclectic range of sources, including medieval art and recent discoveries in natural history. Huysmans, an early supporter, referred to the *Noirs* as “nightmares of science going back to prehistoric times.”³⁰ Indeed, many of these haunting images represent a primordial realm, a dark world that marries the researches of Charles Darwin to the macabre imaginings of Charles Baudelaire and Edgar Allan Poe. By the 1890s, when Redon turned to color, these proclivities were given over to religious, mystic, and occult subject matter, although his references are often deliberately allusive and vague. In a work of about 1905, *Evocation* (FIG. 7.21), he creates a dazzling visual effect of shimmering light against impenetrable dark. The tale it depicts is from the *Ramayana*, a Buddhist text, in which the abducted wife of Rama divulges her whereabouts by scattering jewels.³¹ But the disembodied head is a recurring motif in Redon's work, in images of Orpheus and John the Baptist as well as numerous representations of the soul. The suspended ovoid form—perhaps, in this case, an allusion to the Vedic origin of cosmic light—is equally prevalent. In formal terms, Redon's brilliant play of surface and depth also evokes a numinous realm. Indeed, many of Redon's pastels contain finished *Noirs* underneath, lurking below the surface like nightmares and dreams.³²

An idealist creed devoted to the cult of beauty as a state of spiritual as well as physical grace, Decadent Symbolism is a strange alloy of virtue and vice. Figures are generally androgynous, representing the purity of the soul even as they slyly solicit the erotic gaze. In some circles this aesthetic faith was developed as a form of pseudoreligion, with mystical or occult overtones that served to elevate its adherents above the base existence of the unenlightened philistine. Esoterism of this kind was embodied above all by the eccentric novelist and critic Joséphin Péladan, the self-styled “Sâr Mérodack” (after an ancient Assyrian king). Péladan's persona was as much a revival of the Romantic dandy as an expression of devotion to the creed of Decadence. He indulged the dandy's taste for costume by dressing in a long robe



and fur hat loosely derived from the finery of the Byzantine priesthood, and he expressed a poseur's disdain for the coarse worldliness of bourgeois materialism. His novels portray the age of science and capital as physically and morally corrupt, anathema to the life of the spirit, which he described largely in aesthetic terms. Alexandre Séon's cover design for Péladan's novel *Vice suprême* (1891) shows the Sâr's severed head nailed by the hair to a cross on a hilltop, the last "Latin" martyr to the corrupt excesses of a profane world; Paris — Sodom with an Eiffel Tower — lies in ruins below.³³

In 1892 Péladan founded the Salon de la Rose + Croix, an independent society of artists that held annual exhibitions (mostly in private galleries such as Durand-Ruel) through 1897 complete with poetry readings and pseudosacred music composed by Erik Satie. The long list of artists represented there included lesser-known Frenchmen such as Charles Filiger, Edmond

Aman-Jean, and Armand Point as well as a contingent of painters and sculptors from northern Europe, including Ferdinand Hödler, Carlos Schwabe, Georges Minne, and Jean Toorop. Péladan's ambition was one of retreat rather than advance—an escape from the material and ideological vulgarity of naturalism into a reimagined early Renaissance world of ideal form. The artists associated with the group (who also exhibited at the larger salons) mostly subscribed to this formula. Many of these enigmatic scenes set in unearthly landscapes are actually about art or beauty, featuring emblematic figures such as Orpheus (FIG. 7.24), who was employed throughout the period to represent both. Despite Péladan's disavowal of historical subject matter for Symbolist art, such works apply the devices of academic history painting to hermetic narratives of aesthetic faith. Edmond Aman-Jean invented such a narrative for a lithograph of 1892 (FIG. 7.23) and for the poster of the second Salon

7.24

Alexandre Séon
(1855–1917)

Orpheus's Lamentation,
1896

Oil on wood,
28 3/4 x 45 1/16 in.
(73 x 116 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



de la Rose + Croix in 1893, in which Dante's Beatrice is invoked as an eternal incarnation of ideal beauty. Aman-Jean (like Seurat) had studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts with Henri Lehmann, himself a pupil of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, and Aman-Jean's work represents an adaptation of Ingres's figural type by way of Puvis de Chavannes. Variations on this somewhat academic style—which Péladan preferred to the new manner of the Post-Impressionists—were employed throughout the 1890s for idealized depictions

of women. In this mode, artists such as Lucien Lévy-Dhurmer (FIG. 7.27) could invest even simple portraiture with allegorical overtones relating to beauty as both a material and a spiritual state of being.

A late-century version of academic style continued to occupy many painters who had emerged during the Second Empire. Artists such as Jean Béraud, Carolus-Duran, Jean-Léon Gérôme, Henri Gervex, and Jean-Jacques Henner had achieved international fame, becoming the celebrities of the official Salon exhibitions



7.25 (above)
Jacques Emile Blanche
(1861–1942)
Portrait of Marcel Proust, 1892
Oil on canvas, 28 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ in.
(73.5 x 60.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



7.26 (right)
Giovanni Boldini
(1842–1931)
Count Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac, 1897
Oil on canvas, 63 x 32 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(160 x 82.5 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



(and the Expositions Universelles). All of these painters aspired to perpetuate the grand tradition of history painting, for which they would be patronized by the state. Many of them ran large studios or taught classes at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts that attracted an international clientele of art students. In this way, late academicism in France exerted an enormous impact on public art throughout Europe and the United States. Of all the genres that were displayed at the Salons, however, portraiture—which was, of course, produced largely for a private rather than a public market—is the only one that possessed renewed relevance to Parisian culture at the turn of the century.

Jacques-Emile Blanche (FIG. 7.25), Léon Bonnat, Paul Helleu, and Giovanni Boldini, among others, practiced portraiture as a glittering high-society genre, immortalizing the beau monde. Among the creatures of Paris who were their subjects, none is more exemplary than Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac (FIG. 7.26). The descendant of a great French family, Montesquiou was the model for two fictional characters

that embody Symbolist-period aestheticism in Paris: Floressas des Esseintes, the protagonist in Huysmans's novel *A Rebours*, and Baron de Charlus in Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*. An eccentric dandy of the aristocratic type, the count transformed his various residences in Paris and Versailles into perfumed dens of quasi-decadent taste. Filled with artwork and exotic objects (including numerous representations—and one living example—of his emblem, the bat), these rooms were the setting for extravagant receptions attended by the Parisian haut monde.³⁴ Boldini's portrait of Montesquiou-Fezensac, which was exhibited at the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts, was painted in 1897, when the count was living in a *hôtel* on the rue de l'Université. Its palette reflects the pinks and grays that colored Montesquiou-Fezensac's apartment walls. Speaking of the fashionable contemporaneity of Boldini's portraits, the count himself wrote that they epitomized "Parisianism, Modernity... inscribed by [Boldini] on each leaf of his tree of knowledge and grace."³⁵

7.27

Lucien Lévy-Dhurmer
(1865–1953)

*Woman with a
Medallion (Mystery)*,
1896

Pastel with touches of
black Conté crayon,
over various charcoals,
on cream wove paper
altered to a golden tone,
13 3/4 x 21 1/4 in.
(35 x 54 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

The genre of history painting was largely moribund by this time, a demise that has some bearing on the larger issue of public decoration, a category it had once dominated. In certain respects, public art defines the aesthetic nature of Paris during this period as much as the easel painting of the Post-Impressionists and Symbolists—more so, to judge from visibility alone. In earlier post-Revolution generations, public art had been closely associated with the leading artists—from David to Delacroix—who emerged from the Académie and the official Salon. During the Second Empire, the preeminence of the academic manner was gradually eroded. With the increasing stagnation of the Beaux-Arts tradition and the institutions that sustained it, the quality of public decoration went into irreversible decline during the Third Republic. But the period also witnessed an aggressive decorative campaign that belies any suggestion of flagging ambition.

A need for new mural painting in Paris resulted from the large-scale civic reconstruction in the wake of the destruction caused by the Commune in 1871. A new mayor's office was built in each arrondissement, and the burned and looted Hôtel de Ville, or Paris city hall, was rebuilt. Vast new expanses of empty wall space required an army of painter-decorators, keeping artists occupied well past the turn of the century. Some celebrity artists received direct commissions, but most of the contributors were selected through competitions. The Hôtel de Ville project was administered by a single committee composed of both municipal and state authorities, resulting in numerous conflicts: members from the national Beaux-Arts administration favored a decorative scheme based on idealized allegory, whereas those belonging to the city council promoted modern subjects executed in a naturalist style. The Socialist minority, led by Edouard Vaillant, even claimed that the historical and artistic merit of the project depended on taking images from the "political, economic and social life of contemporary Paris." Compromise prevailed, along with Third Republic ideology: subjects included scenes from French history, didactic representations of the social benefits of Republican life, and allegories of progress and bounty, as well as more conventional personifications of art, music, theater, and dance. The ceiling and various compartments of the great South Hall were decorated by Puvis de Chavannes following

a prescribed scheme: the glorification of the city, showing Paris crowned by the Arts and Sciences, accompanied by Charity, Patriotism, Urbanity, Elegance, Fantasy, Memory, and other allegorical figures; Puvis also depicted the city itself in medieval and modern topographical views.

The Hôtel de Ville marked a significant point in



turn-of-the-century style. Signac (whose own mural, *Au temps d'harmonie*, was painted for the town hall in Montreuil) lamented that the project failed to take advantage of the epoch's true masters. "Imagine these frescoes," he wrote: "'The Joys of Paris,' by Renoir and Manet; 'Women and Sports,' by Degas; 'The Bridges of Paris,'

by Monet; 'The Gardens of Paris,' by Pissarro; still lifes from 'The Belly of Paris,' by Cézanne."³⁶ Ultimately, what the city received instead was an eclectic program representing only the limited range of styles available to artists working in a public mode. Puvis de Chavannes served as a standard for the project, since his idealized



7.28

Puvis de Chavannes
(1824-1898)

The Sacred Grove, 1889

Grand Amphitheater
of the Sorbonne

manner had long been the norm for modern wall painting. The panel *Summer*, one of a pair of paintings for a *salon de passage* at the top of the stairway of honor, is a thoroughly idiomatic example of the artist's classicism applied to an arcadian subject—bathers poised in a silvery landscape. Characterized by a low contrast of light and dark, the style is archaically flat (it imitates early Renaissance fresco painting), a quality that had a significant influence on young modernists, from Post-Impressionist painters to Picasso and Matisse. The companion work, *Winter* (FIG. 7.29), is more distinctive. Puvis's stylistic archaism here evokes a very different pre-industrial world, a wintry forest where he depicts a communal ideal of dignified labor, based on cooperation, which recalls contemporary anarchist writings such as Peter Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*.

Realist alternatives for public decoration during this period rarely won the consensus of committees and juries charged with maintaining the visual decorum of official wall space. At the Hôtel de Ville, however, a number of subjects clearly called for a style that would balance lofty Republican rhetoric with the ballast of palpable truth. The Cabinet du Préfet was the only hall with a preordained subject, the siege of Paris in 1870, and it was understood that this traumatic event required an element of reportage. In this case a competition was held in 1889, and the winner, Adolphe Binet, was announced the following year. Working in a manner that has been characterized as "heroic naturalism," Binet created a cycle of scenes from the Franco-Prussian War, emphasizing duty and sacrifice on a sweeping scale: the call to arms before the statue of Strasbourg on the place de la Concorde; voluntary enlistment on the place du Panthéon; a reconnaissance balloon rising over the trenches. Second place was awarded to Paul Baudouin, whose study for *The Search for the Wounded* (FIG. 7.32) expresses a grave, almost anti-heroic vision that troubled the jury, for whom realism in this context had its limits.³⁷ The desolate scene takes place at night (Baudouin had planned to depict each episode in the cycle at a different time of day),



7.29

Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (1824–1898)

Winter, 1889–93

Mural, Hôtel de Ville





7.30 (above)
 Albert Besnard (1849–1934)
La Plastique, or The Art of Antiquity, 1907
 Cupola panel, Vestibule d'Honneur, Petit Palais
 Oil on canvas

7.31 (opposite)
 Henri Martin (1860–1943)
Apollo and the Muses, 1895
 Ceiling mural, Salon Henri Martin,
 Hôtel de Ville





7.32

Paul Baudouin
(1844–1931)

The Search for the Wounded (study for mural for the Hôtel de Ville), 1889

Oil on canvas,
18¹/₁₆ x 42¹/₁₆ in.
(47 x 107 cm)
Petit Palais

using darkness, snow, and dim lamplight to communicate desperation and gloom.

Baudouin actually made use of Puvis's compositional restraint, although he burdened the master's incorporeal figures with mass and hardship. Most of the other city hall projects feature the more decorative mode of "Salon Symbolism," an attenuated and airy adaptation of Puvis's style that transformed his dry idealism into a refined, soft-focus style. One critic referred to such painters as "les vaporisants."³⁸ Henri Martin and Albert Besnard are the most prominent exponents of this school, with its mannered gestural pantomime and powdery palette well suited to the celebratory affectations of the civic mural. Martin, who exhibited with the Rose + Croix in 1892, adapted certain effects from Neo-Impressionism to create an ethereal luminosity and a mood of vacuous calm; casting long, elegiac shadows, his figures from an ahistorical past haunt the sacred groves of unidentified arcadian provinces (FIG. 7.31). In his easel paintings, Martin perfected an ornamental mode; the surfaces vibrate with form-dissolving light, and the compositions are often measured by the deliberate cadence of tall, narrow trees—devices that would also satisfy wall painting's demands for flattening. At the Hôtel de Ville, Martin decorated a *salon d'entrée* with allegories of literature, music, and the plastic arts. He used contemporary figures to personify the various disciplines, such as the composer Gustave Charpentier and the painter Jean-Paul Laurens, Martin's own instructor,

who appear in modern dress.

For the juries at the Hôtel de Ville, Symbolist figuration such as this—however tame it seems in retrospect—added an element of contemporaneity to the conventional language of allegory. Later described as a masterpiece of Third Republic decoration, Besnard's rather extravagant ceiling mural for the city hall's Salon des Sciences (FIG. 7.33) at first appeared to tip the scales of this balance too far toward the modern, judging from the hostility with which it was initially received by the authorities. This was partly owing to the subject, an allegory of science: "Truth, leading the sciences in its wake, sheds its light on mankind."³⁹ Besnard was carried away by the spirit of the age; the décor was conceived in 1889, when the theme of progress seemed to demand a flamboyant spectacle. His upcast gaze is interplanetary in scope: his heavens are not those of religious faith, the celestial domain typically represented in painted ceilings, but of astronomy. Seizing on the metaphor of light as knowledge, Martin was also influenced by new discoveries in artificial illumination. His palette is prismatic (critics called it strident), evoking chemical and electrical light—a technological luminosity. One observer, the critic Camille Mauclair, claimed that the artist had invented a new way to allegorize modern science, eschewing anecdotal realism in favor of capturing the elation of a new faith.⁴⁰ Besnard's science, no less than Redon's, is a Symbolist's visionary realm in which progress

7.33 (opposite)

Paul-Albert Besnard
(1849–1934)

Truth Leading the Sciences, 1895

Ceiling mural, Salon des Sciences, Hôtel de Ville



7.35 (opposite, left)

Leonetto Cappiello
(1875–1942)

*Return of Réjane at the
Théâtre du Vaudeville
in La Passerelle*, 1902

Pastel, 55 1/2 x 38 1/4 in.
(140 x 97 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

7.36 (opposite, right)

Jules Chéret
(1836–1932)

Poster for "Saxoléine,"
1894

Lithograph,
95 1/4 x 32 7/8 in.
(242 x 83.5 cm)
Musée des Arts
Décoratifs

assumes the spiritual role of the Church.

The delicate figures that occupy turn-of-the-century murals were not confined to the chambers of the Hôtel de Ville. By the 1890s Jules Chéret's *parisiennes* were a ubiquitous presence on the Paris street. Chéret, the most celebrated poster artist of the era, had even greater visibility than Puvis, and he was the acknowledged master of the poster as a form of visual art. "This Fragonard of the street, this Watteau of the intersection, this Delacroix of the sidewalk, this Tiepolo of the public square," one observer wrote ecstatically in 1893.⁴¹ Indeed, the production of posters exploded during this period, and the genre was hailed as a modern counterpart to the fresco, a vernacular public decoration that was democratic in its accessibility. The street became an open-air Salon, and posters elevated to the rank of "*affiches murales*." Poster making came to command the efforts of painters as well as illustrators; art galleries and periodicals such as *La Plume* devoted themselves to new developments in graphic design; and a mania for

collecting erupted (true aficionados snuck around in the middle of the night, tearing posters from walls).

Such was Chéret's celebrity that his characters developed a life of their own, beyond the theaters and household products they were commissioned to advertise (FIG. 7.36). The alluring young woman who beams and capers throughout his work was known as "La Chérette,"⁴² and her omnipresence made her the dominant symbolic apparition of her day. Huysmans recognized in Chéret's relentlessly giddy coquette the commercial personification of "Parisianism," a "demented joy . . . that transcends itself by its own excess, being raised almost to the level of pain."⁴³ This artifice of strained gaiety made Chéret a truly modern successor to the tradition of public decoration—much more so, in certain respects, than his fellows at the Hôtel de Ville, where Chéret himself was also commissioned to decorate a small salon with murals representing the performing arts. Somewhat paradoxically, his posters manage to straddle two realms of contemporary visual

7.34

Eugène Charles Paul
Vasseur (1863–1949)

Poster for "Ripolin,"
1897

Lithograph,
51 x 72 1/8 in.
(127.5 x 181.5 cm)
Bibliothèque Forney



culture, those of advertising and Symbolism. As a creature of the advertising age, La Chérette reminds us that the mural would soon be replaced by the billboard (as light allegory would be by blaring promotionalism); yet she was also a personification of fantasy, abandon, and caprice, a frenetic figure of desire whose effect on the fin de siècle nervous system was said to compare to that of morphine.⁴⁴ An utterly contrasting vision of the new woman of the nineties is offered by Leonetto Cappiello, whose *Réjane* (FIG. 7.35) captures the determined stride of Bernhardt's actress rival, born Gabrielle-Charlotte Reju, who not only made her début at the Théâtre du Vaudeville, but married its director.

Tension between the rhetoric of public art and the language of inner experience altered the otherwise uneventful development of public sculpture during the Third Republic. Following the Franco-Prussian War, the public monument in Paris largely settled into a period of relative sameness. Beginning in the 1870s, sculptures commemorating Republican ideals and notable figures

from French history and culture—many of whom had resided in Paris—proliferated throughout the public squares of the capital. (This corresponds to the work of the Comité des Inscriptions Parisiennes, which was instituted in 1879 to mount white marble plaques throughout the city commemorating significant events and people in the history of Paris.⁴⁵) The sculptural monuments were largely based on long-established

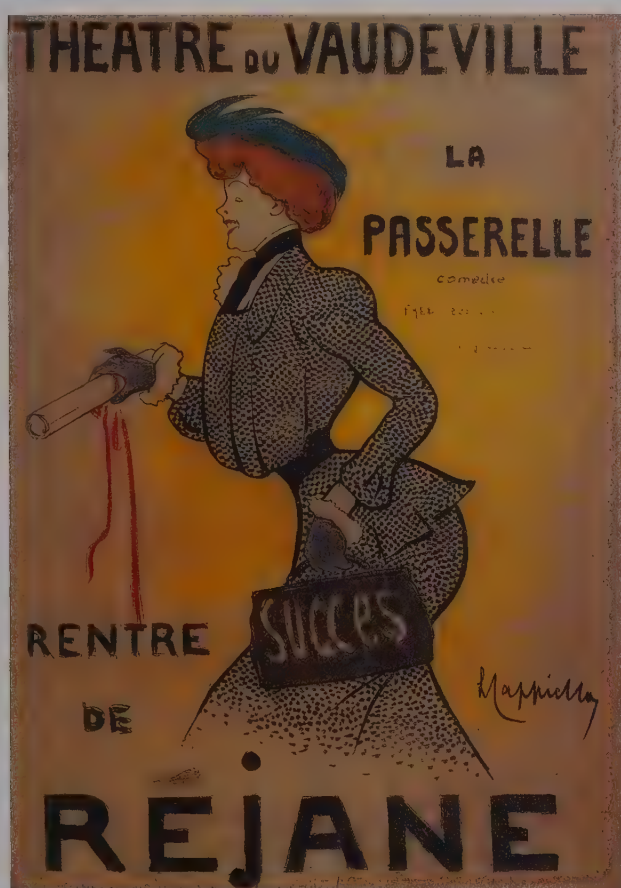




FIG. 7.37
Jules Dalou (1838–1902)
*The Triumph of the
Republic*, 1899
Bronze
Place de la Nation

models, including standing and seated effigies as well as allegorical groups. Many were paid for by public subscription, a new form of patronage that reflected the Republican ideals of social inclusiveness and consensus.⁴⁶ Most representative is Léopold Morice's grandiose *Monument to the Republic*, inaugurated on the place de la République in 1883. A reassuring, wholly unremarkable image, it was selected by a municipal committee from among seventy-eight submissions and financed through a subscription.

Notable exceptions to the generic blandness of late-nineteenth-century public monuments include the works of Jules Dalou (FIG. 7.37), who had returned to Paris from London in 1880, where his left-wing allegiances had forced him into exile following the Commune.

Intensely devoted to the edifying potential of public sculpture, Dalou favored commissions that suited his personal politics, especially subjects that allowed him to incorporate dignified images of modern workers. Such figures appear on a gravely heroic relief frieze for Dalou's monument to Adolphe Alphand (FIG. 7.38) on the avenue Foch (formerly the avenue du Bois-de-Boulogne), which commemorates the former director of public works who had "democratized" Paris with the creation of parks and city squares.⁴⁷

If Dalou invested the public monument with intense personal conviction, Auguste Rodin virtually reinvented the genre, obliging large-scale, inert three-dimensional form to express extreme states of mind through intimations of physical stress and strain. The

results were controversial, even though the artist's stature and celebrity were, by this period, immense (by 1900 Rodin employed dozens of technicians in the production of marble sculpture, a medium in which he produced his most conservative work).⁴⁸ Rodin lived and worked in the Paris suburb of Meudon during most of this period, moving in 1908 to the Hôtel Biron, an early-eighteenth-century house in Paris that was converted into the Musée Rodin after his death in 1916.

The Gates of Hell (FIG. 7.40), conceived as a portal for a proposed Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, has a restless animation that derives not only from its subject, Dante's *Inferno*, but also from a sweeping formal originality. In fact, the decorative-arts museum itself was never built. Refunding his commission money, Rodin continued to modify the *Gates*, which was composed of plaster, for several decades. In this way the work became a private essay in the potentially

perpetual morphosis of sculptural form. The ebb and flow of energy across its relief surface also partly reflects the artist's own restless indecision over time about the composition. At the large exhibition of his sculpture during the Exposition Universelle in 1900, opinions were divided over the "unfinished" quality that seemed to characterize Rodin's work of this period in general, and the *Gates* in particular. "Limits are not limits," one critic observed about the work, "and the dream expands and relaxes endlessly like a river within its crumbling banks."⁴⁹

In its epic nature, *The Gates of Hell* is generally linked to the great Renaissance tradition of architectural sculpture (the artist based early drawings on Lorenzo Ghiberti's *Doors of Paradise* for the Baptistery in Florence). But as Rodin gradually distanced himself from Dante's tale, he supplanted the episodic geometry of the Renaissance monument with an antinarrative cascade

7.38

Jules Dalou (1838–1902)

Monument to

Adolphe Alphand, 1899

Dauphiné stone

Avenue Foch



of gestural ambiguity and unstable form. Characters such as Paolo and Francesca have been transformed into vessels of physical and spiritual torment; and Dante himself, perched on the tympanum, became the *Thinker*, whose bodily torsion expresses creative energy as a cerebral and emotional act of excruciating labor. For many contemporary observers, this narrative quality (and its formal expression) constituted the work's modernity, and they described *The Gates of Hell* as a vision of spiritual incertitude and unresolved aspirations, of the tragiheroic struggles of a faithless age.⁵⁰ The organic quality of Rodin's sculptural rhetoric has a visual and symbolic affinity with Art Nouveau, which was broadly (if temporarily) reconceiving the

appearance of Paris itself at the time. It also reflects his search for a way to reinvent the form and function of public art.

Such an ambition guaranteed the controversial reception of Rodin's late work, above which the *Monument to Balzac* (FIG. 7.39) towers like an object lesson in the seeming unbridgeability of the gulf between private expression and public meaning. Commissioned for the place du Palais-Royal by the Société des Gens de Lettres in 1891, the work took six years to realize, partly owing to the artist's relentless pursuit of Balzac's identity through studied likeness and significant gesture. Ultimately, these elements were transformed by an extreme synthesis through which



7.39

Auguste Rodin
(1840–1917)

Monument to Balzac,
1897–98 (cast 1954)

Bronze, 111 x 48 1/4 x 41 in.
(282 x 122.5 x 104.2 cm)

The Museum of
Modern Art, New York;
presented in memory
of Curt Valentin by
his friends



7.40

Auguste Rodin
(1840-1917)

The Gates of Hell,
1880-1917

Bronze, 20 ft. 10 in. x
13 ft. 1 in. x 2 ft. 9½ in.
(6.35 x 4 x .85 m)
Musée Rodin



Rodin replaced conventional portraiture with the almost abstract characterization of genius as an elemental force of will and potency (Rodin may well have intended Balzac to appear as if he were clutching an erection beneath his robe).⁵¹ The visual result, shaped by the reductive sweep of Balzac's heavy cloak, was derided as formless or caricatural. The critical hostility made Rodin remove the plaster *Balzac* from the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1898 (which was held that year in the Galerie des Machines), where his adoring public was better served by *The Kiss*, a marble monument to sentiment and idealized beauty. Rejected by its commissioners, *Balzac* was defended by Rodin as his masterpiece, which he situated "in the line of demarcation between commercial sculpture and the art of sculpture that we no longer have in Europe."⁵²

The expressive implications of Rodin's work challenged the nature of public art. Unlike Besnard, Martin, and other pseudo-Symbolists at the Hôtel de Ville, however, Rodin did not merely adapt a progressive visual vocabulary to familiar aesthetic conventions. Instead he redefined conventional practice by imbuing monumental sculpture with the kind of formal and emotional urgency previously reserved for experimental work on a much smaller scale. Among the late-nineteenth-century sculptors working in Paris, only the Italian Medardo Rosso approached the sculpted figure with anything like Rodin's abstract vision, even though Rosso's tremulous art was far removed from the exigencies of the public monument. The two artists knew each other, although they had a falling-out in 1898, precipitated by what Rosso considered to be Rodin's adaptation of his works for the *Monument to Balzac*.

After Rosso moved from Milan to Paris in 1889 (exhibiting work in the Exposition Universelle), the social realism he had practiced in Italy gave way to a personal idiom that closely corresponded to new developments in Symbolist painting.⁵³ Rosso sought to

7.41

Medardo Rosso (1858–1928)

Impression on the Boulevard: Paris at Night (lost or destroyed), 1895–96

Formerly Museo Medardo Rosso, Barzio, Italy

blur the distinction between painting and sculpture by making his sculptural forms imitate the transient visual effects of atmosphere and light. The influence of ambient perception resulted in generalized contours and an absence of descriptive detail. This effect is heightened in the studio photographs that were taken under Rosso's supervision. Here the sculptures are bathed in a murky half-light, allowing the artist to control the viewer's perception of his work.

In painting, the only counterpart to Rosso's approach can be found in the work of Eugène Carrière, whose broadly painted figures are enveloped in a thick atmospheric haze of brown and gray (FIG. 7.42). The shrouded appearance of Carrière's soft-focus approach

was a form of Symbolist idealization, an expression of essence rather than appearance. Carrière, a fixture in the Symbolist community in Paris, was a close friend of Rodin's (he wrote the catalog preface for Rodin's exhibition in 1900, referring to the figures as "eternal forms"⁵⁴), and his style may have had an impact on both Rodin and Rosso. Ultimately, however, the sculptor's approach to condensed form was far more dynamic. In Rosso's case, sculpture became almost pictorial.

Impression of the Boulevard: Paris at Night (FIG. 7.41) is one of the few large-scale pieces he produced, a plaster (now lost) that is believed to have measured roughly two meters tall. Eccentric and ambitious, it monumentalizes the fugitive urban glance.



7.42

Eugène Carrière
(1849–1906)

Maternity, 1892

Oil on canvas, 59 x
71 ¼ in. (150 x 181 cm)
Musée Arthur Rimbaud,
Charleville-Mézières



ART NOUVEAU

The aesthetic life of fin de siècle Paris was distinguished by a self-conscious search for stylistic identity. In terms of architecture and design, nothing less than the visual character of the city itself was at stake. Eugène Vavasœur's poster for Ripolin (FIG. 7.34), a commercial brand of enamel paint, reflects the colloquial dimension of urban decor (one that would later become an element of Cubism), but a more exalted debate about the future of Paris was emerging at this time. The emphasis was on novelty: urbanists spoke of "le nouveau Paris," and advocates of art in the service of sociocultural reform proclaimed the advent of "le style moderne" and "l'art nouveau."

The movement that has come to be known as Art Nouveau was an international phenomenon, flourishing most prominently in England and in Belgium, where

the term was coined. All versions shared a new emphasis on the significance—even the primacy—of the applied arts, which were shaping the style of modern life: its exteriors and interiors, its objects of daily use. Outside France (in the writings of William Morris and Henry van de Velde, for example), decorative and industrial arts (renamed "l'art social") were instrumental to a utopian agenda of socialist reform. The conventional hierarchy of the fine and applied arts was understood to reflect the economic inequities of class; once integrated, the visual arts could be redirected toward a larger audience, thereby improving everyone's quality of life.

This new emphasis on the decorative arts was slower to emerge in France than elsewhere in Europe. Eventually, however, craft reform became state sanctioned. In 1890 the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts

7.43 (opposite)

Jules Lavirotte
(1864–1924)

Façade, 29 avenue Rapp,
1901



7.44

Louis Bonnier
(1856–1946)

Main entranceway to the
Maison de l'Art Nouveau,
22 rue de Provence, 1895

7.46 (far right)
 Georges De Feure
 (1868–1943)
 Gilded furniture and
 silk wall-covering, 1900
 Danish Museum
 of Decorative Art,
 Copenhagen

7.45 (below)
 Eugène Gaillard
 (1862–1933)
 Walnut cabinet, 1900
 Danish Museum
 of Decorative Art,
 Copenhagen

was formed to organize an official Salon specifically devoted to promoting the craft movement. In 1894 the state cofounded, with the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs (a society established to promote traditional French art), a permanent Musée des Arts Décoratifs. *Art social* had its advocates in France but, as Debora Silverman has shown, official French efforts at reform often stressed the elitism of the decorative arts—specifically, the eighteenth-century aristocratic heritage of Rococo design, which was newly valued (and ideologically justified, by Third Republicans) as an expression of national genius.⁵⁵ Influenced by the earlier example of the writers Jules and Edmond de Goncourt, promoters of a Rococo revival during the Second Empire, the reform effort was institutionalized during the 1890s under the auspices of the Union Centrale. Historians, governmental ministers, and *amateurs* collaborated to promote the study of the decorative arts and the professionalization of their manufacture. Leading figures in the cultural administration, such as Roger Marx, advanced the unity



of fine and applied arts as a return to the integrated eighteenth-century aristocratic interior. Unlike the eclectic historicism of the Second Empire, which was scorned as pastiche, the organic character of the Rococo style was supposed to inspire artisans to use ostensibly ahistorical source material—especially lines, shapes, and patterns derived from nature. It is tempting to distinguish craft reform from the positivist ethos associated with faith in new technology, exemplified by the architecture of iron and glass: one esteems elegance, luxuriousness, and refined manual skill, the other functionalism and standardization. However, both rejected imitation of the past (in principle, if not always in practice), substituting innovation as a model through which the “new art” could join—rather than plagiarize—the history of style.

The development of modern style belonged in part to a French nationalist agenda, but foreign sources played a significant role. In Paris, a prominent figure in decorative-arts reform was Siegfried Bing, a connoisseur and prosperous entrepreneur of German descent whose family business was the manufacture of porcelain. By the 1870s, when French *japonisme* had reached a peak, Bing developed a taste for Japanese art, eventually

bypassing the conventional export market and acquiring modern and antique works in great quantity from collectors throughout Japan. His gallery on the rue de Provence (just north of the boulevard Haussmann, in the ninth arrondissement) became a center of activity for the study and dissemination of Japanese visual culture. Like objects of the Rococo, Japanese ceramics in particular were appreciated by fin de siècle craftsmen for their organic design as well as their sophisticated color and texture. The Japanese example also demonstrated the relevance of a refined craft tradition to the beautification of daily life—in any case, the daily life of the Japanese aristocracy, to whom these objects had originally belonged.

While visiting New York in 1894, Bing was impressed by the innovative decorative-arts workshop of Louis Comfort Tiffany (Bing's enthusiasm is a classic example of French appreciation for America's presumed freedom from the constraints of cultural tradition), and this influenced his own venture. In 1895 he transformed his shop into a Tiffany-like *Maison de l'Art Nouveau* (FIG. 7.44), dedicated to the integration of painting, sculpture, and the applied arts. There Bing sold examples of modern European and American design as well as prints, ceramics, and other objects from Japan. The new enterprise was devoted to marketing the aesthetic premise of a unified interior, in which paintings and prints, sculpture, furniture, screens,

7.47

Louis Majorelle
(1859–1926)

Interior, Restaurant
Lucas-Carton, place de
la Madeleine, 1905





7.48
René Lalique
(1860–1945)
Siren diadem,
c. 1897–98
Bronze, emerald
cabochons, opals
in gold setting,
3¹¹/₁₆ x 5¹/₂ x 5¹/₄ in.
(9.7 x 14 x 13.3 cm)
Musée des Arts
Décoratifs

tapestries, carpets, and utilitarian objets d'art functioned together as a stylistic ensemble. Bing divided the gallery into separate model rooms, commissioning or soliciting works from artists and designers. The gallery's aesthetic was light, graceful, and largely devoid of labored historicism. Despite early criticism (the unorthodox harmony of Bing's interiors displeased some observers), the gallery significantly intensified the brief eminence of Art Nouveau while revealing to Paris the emergence of an international style in turn-of-the-century decorative arts. French objects were shown with examples from England, Belgium, and the United States, much to the consternation of critics who adhered to a nationalist agenda; among Bing's most significant exhibitions was a show of sixty works by the Norwegian Edvard Munch in May 1896.⁵⁶

Eager to surpass the limitations of a gallery showroom, Bing expanded his studio during the late 1890s, and in 1900 he established an Art Nouveau workshop for the production of jewelry, furniture, textiles, and ceramics. Bing invited France's finest young exponents of the new style to work there and disseminated the results throughout the European design community. Among the most significant were Edward Colonna, Georges De Feure (a Dutch artist working in Paris), and Eugène Gaillard, who produced objects that attracted both domestic and international acclaim from informed connoisseurs and critics; their achievement was characterized as the beginning of a new preeminence of French craft. Of course, the material richness and

rarefied decorative refinement of their work meant that it was accessible primarily to a wealthy elite, for whom an "ahistorical" evocation of the Rococo was plainly appealing.

The Rococo aspect of Art Nouveau design was noted by many critics, though its references to nature were understood to be a revitalization, rather than a copy, of eighteenth-century style. In furniture by Gaillard (FIG. 7.45) and De Feure (FIG. 7.46), which was frequently viewed this way, the elegant buoyancy of the Rococo was reenvisioned as a pulsing curvilinearity. The heritage of the luxury-craft tradition was clear in their attention to detail—the matching of materials such as walnut and bronze through a careful balance of patina and tint, and the choreography of sinuous carved decoration that animates the surfaces of the object. The design as well as the decoration was organic, but despite a certain extravagant aspect, nothing interfered with the functional or structural properties of the piece. The biomorphic did, however, play a rhetorical role. Organic vitalism, which courses through Art Nouveau, carried associations of germination and growth, a visual and symbolic language of renewal that italicized the new spirit of cultural rejuvenation. In lavish commercial interiors modern style revealed its true debt to the Rococo; mirrored rooms for luxury restaurants, such as Maxim's and Lucas-Carton (FIG. 7.47) by Louis Majorelle, show Art Nouveau in an ambience of opulent intimacy.

In addition to its abstract organic elements, Art Nouveau comprised a compendium of specific motifs

7.49 (opposite)
Jean Dampé (1854–1945)
La Paix au foyer, 1900
Ivory, ash, jade, enamel,
and granite, 37³/₈ x 19¹¹/₁₆
x 9⁷/₁₆ in. (95 x 50 x
24 cm)
Musée des Arts
Décoratifs





7.50

Camille Claudel
(1864-1943)

The Waltz, after 1893

Bronze, 17 x 9 x 13 1/2 in.
(43.2 x 23 x 34.2 cm)

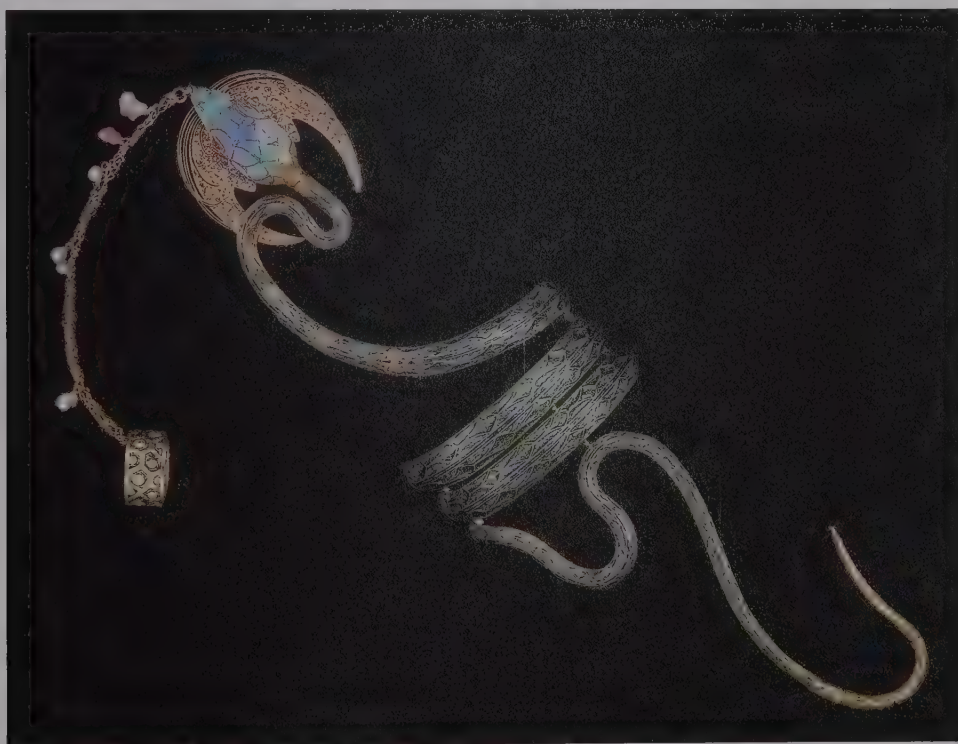
Musée Rodin

from nature—some admittedly more decorative than symbolic. Jewelry by René Lalique and glassware by Daum, for example, teem with blossoms, leaves, seashells, peacock feathers, and winged insects (FIG. 7.48). Among artisans, the glassmaker Emile Gallé attained perhaps the most accomplished synthesis of imagery, style, and meaning.⁵⁷ Leader of the so-called *Ecole de Nancy*, Gallé worked in that city in the Lorraine region of France, but his work was prominently exhibited and patronized in Paris during this period. Gallé, who learned glasswork at his father's faience and glass manufactory, was an amateur botanist, and the Nancy school is distinguished by a pronounced affinity for natural history. Much like Redon, Gallé wielded natural science as an instrument of emotional mystery rather than empirical truth.⁵⁸

In sculpture, the stylistic elements of Art Nouveau take various forms. In many cases, a craft sensibility is manifested by the use of new materials. Jean Dampé's pseudomedieval altarpiece *La Paix au foyer* (FIG. 7.49) is executed in ivory, ash, jade, enamel, and granite, demonstrating a preciousness that is complemented by meticulous attention to detail. Small-scale work in mixed materials, including ivory, became something

of a minor movement in sculpture during the period and was produced for a market of wealthy decorative-arts *amateurs*. The curvilinearity of Art Nouveau is another element that can be traced through sculpture at the turn of the century. In Camille Claudel's *Waltz* (FIG. 7.50), the dancing couple is surrounded by an enveloping cloak—a Rodinesque drapery (Claudel was Rodin's esteemed student) that is charged with the nervous energy of the Art Nouveau line. Claudel had originally sculpted the two figures in the nude and submitted the work to the minister of the beaux-arts in the hope of being awarded a state commission for a large version in marble. In response, she was asked to add drapery in order to mute the blatant eroticism of the lovers and to heighten the impression of a gyrating dance. The marble appears never to have been executed, but smaller versions in bronze were widely produced, and *The Waltz* became Claudel's most popular work. One edition executed by Emile Muller in fired ceramic was exhibited by Bing at the Salon de l'Art Nouveau in 1895.

Woman occupied a privileged place among the organic motifs in Art Nouveau.⁵⁹ In the discourse on the Rococo revival, the eighteenth-century interior was



7.51
Alphonse Mucha
(1860–1939), concept,
and Georges Fouquet
(1862–1957), execution
Snake bracelet for
Sarah Bernhardt, c. 1899
Gold, enamel, opal
mosaic, rubies, and
diamonds, diameter:
8⁷/₁₆ in. (21.5 cm)
Private collection



7.52

Alphonse Mucha
(1860-1939)

Poster for Job Cigarette
Papers, 1898

Color lithograph,
54 x 37 1/2 in.

(138.5 x 92.5 cm)

Private collection

understood to reflect the guiding hand of the aristocratic patroness, thus serving as a prototype for the feminine realm of the modern domestic interior. The feminine sensibility was also characterized as innately organic and decorative, a natural expression of renewal. This widespread symbolic conception of feminine creativity also underlays the *femme-fleur*, a persistent iconographical trope in Art Nouveau in which women and flowers sprout from the same phylogeny of decorative form.

The cult of the woman culminated in two figures of the fin de siècle Paris stage: Sarah Bernhardt and Loïe Fuller. The “divine” Bernhardt was already a towering celebrity by 1894, at age fifty, when Alphonse Mucha, a young Czech painter and illustrator, made his debut on the walls of Paris with a poster for her revival of Victorien Sardou’s *Gismonda* at the Théâtre de la Renaissance (FIG. 7.53). This was the beginning of a six-year association between Bernhardt and Mucha, who are inseparably entwined as purveyors of modern style. “In all her gestures, one recognizes the principle of the spiral,” explained the composer Reynaldo Hahn; that serpentine form was even said to determine the folds of her costumes.⁶⁰ In his *Gismonda* poster, Mucha invented a graphic equivalent for the dignity and decorative splendor of Bernhardt’s stage presence, and the poster launched a Mucha vogue.

Mucha’s only true antecedent was the graphic artist Eugène Grasset, who composed an important style manual of florid botanical decoration,⁶¹ which he applied to furniture and jewelry as well as posters and stained glass. But Mucha took Grasset’s flat linearity to an extreme of ornamental complexity. His proclivity for elaborate interlacing (or *entrelac*) and his liberal use of gold (FIG. 7.52) derive in part from medieval Celtic design, a northern import that imposed severe hieraticism on the biomorphic line. Arched framing devices, geometric ornamentation, and tilelike patterns also give a distinctly architectonic quality to Mucha’s posters, especially those executed in an elongated, life-size vertical format, marking a new formality in poster design. In the serpentine bracelet that he created for Bernhardt with the jeweler Georges Fouquet, the gold and enamel of Mucha’s palette are given tangible form (FIG. 7.51).

From her first appearance at the Folies-Bergère in 1892, the American dancer Loïe Fuller was hailed by artists and theorists as Art Nouveau incarnate, an



7.53

Alphonse Mucha
(1860–1939)

Poster for *Gismonda*
with Sarah Bernhardt,
1894

Color lithograph,
85 x 29¼ in.
(216 x 74.2 cm)
Musée des Arts
Décoratifs

7.54
René Binet (1866–1911)
Porte Monumentale,
Exposition Universelle
1900

artiste-décorateur.⁶² Fuller performed with voluminous veils of translucent silk that enveloped her body and billowed with histrionic sweep in the course of a choreography intended to evoke the perpetual metamorphosis of forms in nature—birds, butterflies, flames, and flowers. She was the ultimate *femme-fleur*; her body was a pistil, Roger Marx observed, surrounded by the petal-like swirl of the veils.⁶³ As in the work by Gallé, an aura of mystery surrounded the spectacle of Fuller's dance (Mallarmé called it "a silence throbbing with *crêpes de Chine*"), and its impact was traced to the visual suggestibility of the unconscious.⁶⁴ With Art Nouveau being discussed during the period as an essentially femi-

nine (both organic and decorative) art, "La Fuller" virtually incarnated this principle.

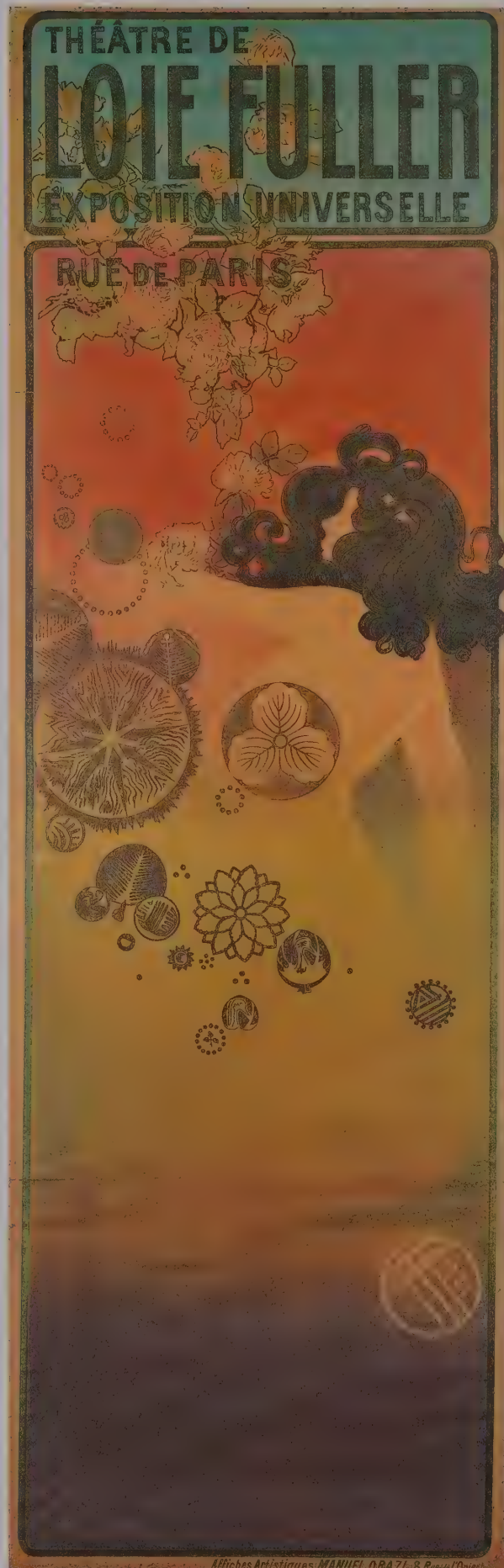
In a startling theatrical novelty, Fuller's veils were illuminated by electric lights, some projected through slides or chemical solutions to achieve splendid "fluorescent" effects of changing color. "In every scene she reappeared," Marx wrote, "the same yet different, displaying an inventive originality that baffled imitation."⁶⁵ The changing spectrum of luminous hues impressed Fuller's best interpreters, such as Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec and the poster artists Chéret and Manuel Orazi (FIG. 7.55), whose lithographic representations of her were printed in different colors. Toulouse-Lautrec



created fifty variations.

At the Exposition Universelle of 1900, Fuller performed in a theater specially designed for her by Henri Sauvage. The façade was sculpted in plaster by Pierre Roche as a series of undulating veils, lifted like a stage curtain (or a hem) to expose the entrance. In some respects, the 1900 fair offered kitsch or amusement-park versions of many themes and motifs from the one held in 1889. Pavilion architecture grew fantastical in shape and decoration. Writing about the exposition, Rémy de Gourmont distinguished between historicizing design and an “artificial” fairground style, asserting that the latter, though it might look absurd, was at least “original in its hideousness,” though less an example of true innovation than of brilliant fakery.⁶⁶ Located on the place de la Concorde, the Porte Binet was the ceremonial gateway to the fair (FIG. 7.54). Created by the architect René Binet, it was an extravagant, monumental composite of beaux-arts style, orientalism, and Art Nouveau. The structure consisted of an open dome with three large arches flanked by minarets; it was covered with ornamental sculpture, colored ceramic tile, and jewellike glass, and crowned with a statue of La Parisienne wearing a dress and cloak designed by the contemporary couturier Jeanne Paquin. At ground level, a hemicycle was decorated with a realist frieze devoted to modern labor. The overall shape was vaguely oriental—a loose pastiche of Moorish and Byzantine sources; however, Binet’s forms were also taken from paleontology and primordial life forms.

Wildly eclectic and fanciful, the Porte Binet was an emblem of the exposition and especially of the change from the 1889 fair’s positivism to a festival of millennial mirth. If the Eiffel Tower had been a symbol as well as an amusement, the closest thing to it in 1900 was an actual ride—the *Grande Roue*, or Great Wheel (FIG. 7.57), a colossal Ferris wheel that was capable of carrying sixteen hundred people up to a 348-foot-high (106-meter) aerial view. Similarly, a moving sidewalk put new technology at the service of tired feet. Most visibly of all, regard for science was now manifested as an over-the-top infatuation with electric light, of which Loïe Fuller was clearly emblematic. This was also embodied in the Palais de l’Electricité and Château d’Eau (FIG. 7.56)—none other than Ferdinand Dutert’s Galerie des Machines (see FIG. 7.13) now cloaked in neo-Rococo



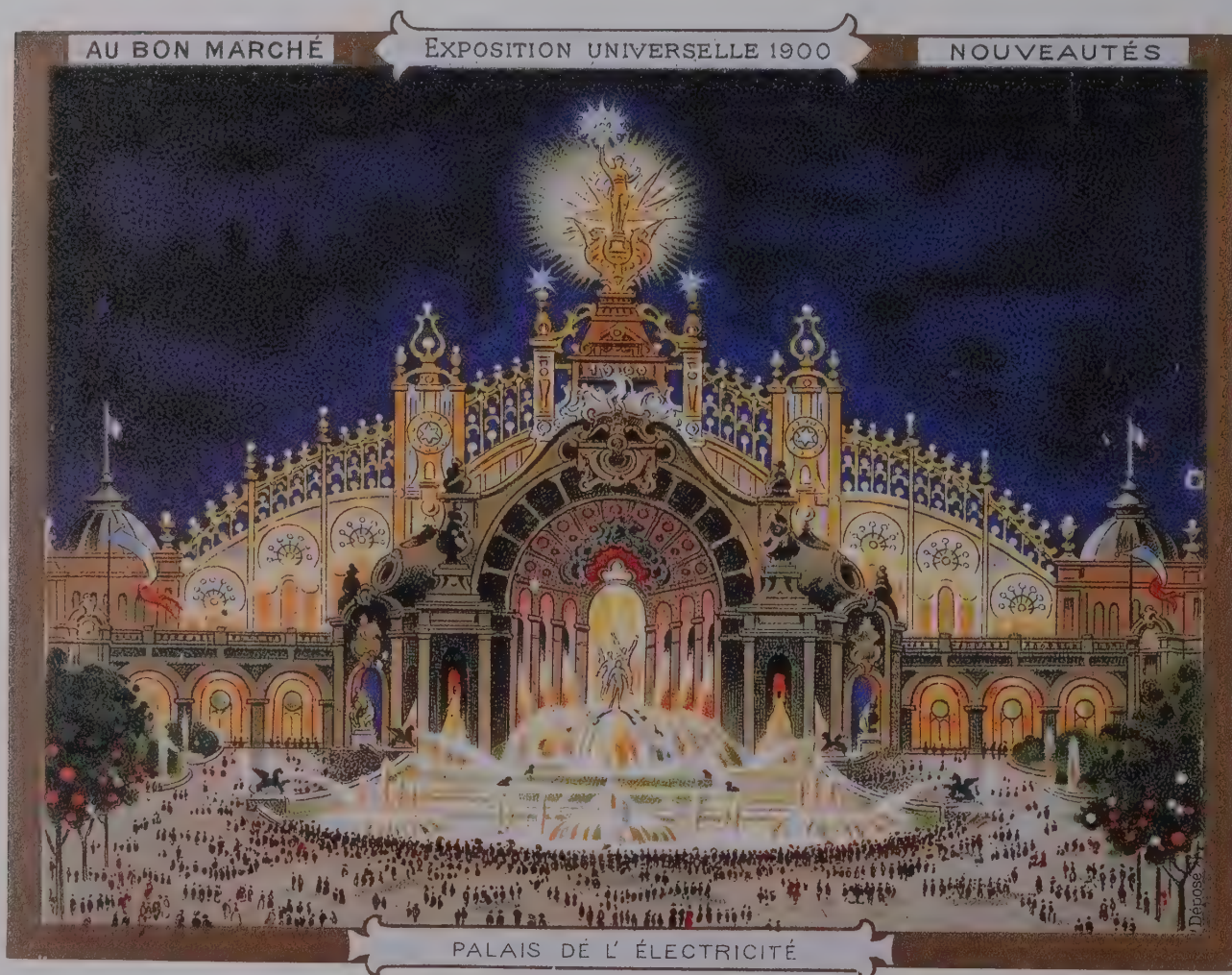
7.55
Emmanuel-Joseph-
Raphael Orazi
(1860–1934)
Poster for “Théâtre de
Loïe Fuller,” 1900
Color lithograph,
80 x 25 7/8 in.
(200 x 64 cm)
Chrysler Museum of
Art, Norfolk, Virginia;
gift of Walter P.
Chrysler, Jr.

plasterwork and studded with 5,000 multicolored incandescent lightbulbs. The Palais was also a power station that supplied electric current to the entire fair. Nocturnal illumination at the Palais and the Château d'Eau—a cascading neo-Baroque grotto and fountain placed in front of the nine-bay façade—was the sensation of the exposition. Electric light transformed the entire fair-ground, and electricity itself was characterized as a dazzling force of unfathomable potential:

It was progress, the poetry of both rich and poor; it bestowed light in abundance. . . . At night projectors swept across the Champ-de-Mars and the Château d'Eau sparkled with cyclamen colors; it was a tumbling mass of greens, orchid-colored flashes, flaming lilies, orchestrations of liquid fire, a riot of volts and amperes. Electricity was accumulated, condensed, transformed, put into jars, stretched along wires, rolled round coils, and then discharged into the

water, over the fountains, over the roofs and into the trees. It was the scourge, the religion, of 1900.⁶⁷

Given this spectacle of energy unleashed from the secret recesses of nature, the exposition was an ideal setting for Art Nouveau, which was widely shown there. Modern French crafts filled the exhibition spaces of the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs and the special pavilion erected by Bing, and applied arts in the new style were also imported on an international scale. Supporters promoted the practical application of modern design, even though the apotheosis of Art Nouveau was less a triumph of craft reform than a flourishing of luxury arts. The Louvre and Bon Marché department stores attempted to mass-produce Art Nouveau household objects for sale during the exposition, but their disappointing quality proved that the neo-Rococo was unsuited to popular consumption.



756

*Palais de l'Électricité,
Exposition Universelle
1900*

Color lithograph
Private collection



7.57

Albert Dorfinant
(1881-1976)

*The Great Wheel of
Paris, 1900*

Lithograph, 62 $\frac{7}{8}$ x
46 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (160 x 118 cm)
Musée de la Publicité

THE AESTHETIC OF THE STREET

A esthetic reform had special pertinence to a more expansive domain of visual culture, that of the Paris street. Around 1900 the new interest in the decorative arts carried over to the street (significantly, benches, lampposts, and other fixtures are called *mobilier urbain*—urban furniture). Critics and theorists spoke of “l’esthétique de la rue” and “l’art dans la rue.”⁶⁸ For the architect Frantz Jourdain, high standards of design applied to the street could improve the greatest number of lives by giving all classes increased access to the benefits of fine art. The writer Gustave Kahn identified two forms of urban decor: “stationary” (such as building façades) and “mobile” ornament (posters, light fixtures, signboards, and storefronts). The poster, in particular, was said to be transforming the visual culture of the daily promenade, and Kahn hailed artists such as Chéret, Grasset, and Mucha as the pictorial poets laureate of a new age. For the urbanist Emile Magne, the decor of the street complemented the protean spectacle of the street itself, with all its “pleasures of the soul and the senses . . . dreams, loves, festivals, triumphs and revolutions.” With new developments in electric light, a “fusion of science and art for maximum magnificence,”⁶⁹ this domain was envisioned as a veritable fairyland.

In this context, when the subway system—the Métropolitain—was developed during the 1890s, its potential impact on the appearance of urban Paris instigated a quarrel between engineers and architects over the proper design for cars, kiosks, and other appurtenances. Charles Garnier seized the occasion, on behalf of the conservative Société Centrale des Architectes, to decry the rise of modern style: “Paris should not transform itself into a factory,” he said; “it should remain a museum.”⁷⁰ In fact, submissions for the Métro design competition were largely characterized by the sort of soft classicism that Garnier condoned. But the president of the administrative council at the Compagnie du Métropolitain had a taste for Art Nouveau, and with his intervention, Hector Guimard was awarded the contract.

With the Métro commission, Guimard came closer than any other architect to inserting the organic elements of Art Nouveau design into the lives of every city dweller with a visual vernacular he called the *style Guimard*. Guimard was originally a furniture designer, and his kiosks for the Paris subway (FIG. 7.58) used

iron and glass in a way that approximated the intimacy of the decorative arts. These entrances varied in size and complexity: some were composed of railings alone, whereas others—such as the one at the Porte Dauphine station—comprised gates, lampposts, and canopies with frosted glass. Between 1900 and 1902 a number of Guimard’s subway kiosks were installed throughout Paris, including the place de l’Etoile, the place de la Bastille, and the Hôtel de Ville; most have since been dismantled or demolished. Guimard’s designs achieved a refined preciousness of line, merging industrial materials with the meticulousness of craft. But nature was their chief referent. The glass panels, for example, were compared to dragonfly wings⁷¹; and in Guimard’s ironwork, Art Nouveau attained a state of metaphoric perfection in which iron rails imitated stems and bones, the living structural elements of nature. Indeed, these designs were also rhetorically apt, since their organicism reiterated certain figures of speech associated with the subway project, which was compared to a system of arteries and veins.

Architecture was also included in the craft-reform movement. Disparaging the monotony of the Second Empire street, with its long expanses of white stone and black wrought iron, Kahn called for a new approach to overall design, urging architects to learn from recent developments in the applied arts. He advocated polychrome façades that combined materials such as stone, brick, and iron and that were finished with ceramic window frames and enamel details.⁷² In keeping with the gendered rhetoric of the Union Centrale, he attributed decorative polychromy to the influence of feminine couture: the “embryo of a future architectural Renaissance,” women’s “innate” appreciation of color and ornamentation countered what Kahn perceived as the black-and-white evening wear of the masculine Haussmannian façade.

With its rich variety of color and texture, Guimard’s Castel Béanger (FIG. 7.59), an apartment house in the newly emerging *haut bourgeois* quarter of Auteuil in the sixteenth arrondissement, clearly corresponds to Kahn’s ideal. The building represents no radical departure from the conventional luxury apartment block (unlike the genuinely radical work of Victor Horta in Brussels, from which Guimard adapted his curvilinear design), but it does bear an overlay of ceramic polychrome tile

7.58 (opposite)
Hector Guimard
(1867–1942)
Métropolitain station
entrance, Porte
Dauphine, 1899–1904



and biomorphic ornamentation in iron and stone. The picturesque asymmetry of the façade, which was first conceived by Guimard as a neo-Gothic design in the manner of Eugène Viollet-le-Duc, belies the antielectic purity of Art Nouveau style. Similarly, the apartment block at 29 avenue Rapp (FIG. 7.43) created by Jules Lavirotte brings a baroque plasticity to the ornamentation of the new school. The flamboyant third and fourth stories—which contain an arcaded loggia—are faced with baked sandstone and glazed stoneware tiles by Alexandre Bigot, the owner of the building, whose factory produced enamel decoration for every major architect working in this manner.⁷³

At Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste in Montmartre (FIG. 7.60), Anatole de Baudot applied the devices of Art Nouveau style to church architecture, a minor genre during the Third Republic. Baudot collaborated with the engineer Paul Cottancin, who pioneered a construction technique of wire-reinforced concrete. The entire building was fabricated according to this system and is notable for having been among the first composed as a solid

block of one material.⁷⁴ A student of Henri Labrouste and Viollet-le-Duc, Baudot treated reinforced concrete as a flexible and economical extension of iron architecture,⁷⁵ and he applied this new technology to a neomedieval design; the striking sculptural façade is a schematic adaptation in pink brick and glazed earthenware (by Bigot) of interlacing gothic or Celtic lines (FIG. 7.61). Baudot's distribution of lines and space recalls Mucha's posters, with their elaborately decorated geometric borders and frames. Fittingly, the term *immeuble-placard* (poster-building) was used to describe a tall, narrow building erected (or "posted") on a small, odd-shaped urban plot, such as the church's modest, sloping site.

By the time Kahn's book *L'Esthétique de la rue* was published in 1901, Art Nouveau had already begun to fall from favor in Paris as an approach to architecture, having been criticized as mannered and eccentric. Guimard's "frog-eyed" Métro style was outmoded by 1904, when his proposal for a large subway stop at the place de l'Opéra was rejected in favor of a classical

7.59 (right)
Hector Guimard
(1867–1942)
Castel Béranger, 1898

7.60 (far right)
Anatole de Baudot
(1834–1915)
Façade, church of Saint
Jean l'Évangéliste de
Montmartre, 1904

7.61 (opposite)
Anatole de Baudot
(1834–1915)
Detail of portal,
church of Saint Jean
l'Évangéliste de
Montmartre, 1904





IL Y A
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DIEU
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HOMME



design (the tame historicism to which Guimard had almost lost the original metro competition). In *Le Nouveau Paris*, a survey of recent trends published in 1913, Raymond Escholier compared the rarefied structural vocabulary of Art Nouveau to the recondite linguistic effects by Symbolist poets such as Mallarmé. But he also noted that Art Nouveau had encouraged a new emphasis in residential architecture on the hand-crafted façade. And even after the turn of the century, architecture as craft continued to peak in buildings such as Lavirotte's Ceramic-Hôtel, a compact but undulating Flemish-style tower house completely covered in Bigot's tiles, which was well received in the façade competition of 1905. Indeed, increasing variegation of color, texture, and shape promoted the rise of an architectural picturesque.⁷⁶

Ultimately, the development of architecture in Paris around 1900 occurred in Haussmann's wake, revealing a close rapport between nostalgia and change. Haussmann's boulevards—long, straight prospects distinguished by a tyrannical regularity of massing, proportion, and style—had resulted in widespread discontent. Comparing Paris to other European cities, the architectural community had grown frustrated with restrictive Second Empire building codes and longed for new opportunities, especially in residential design. The stylistic development of the Paris street would be shaped by their regret and the urge to recover a quality of urban visual experience that had been lost by the near obliteration of “old Paris” under Napoleon III (see chapter 6). Practical modernization, however, continued to have a Haussmannian cast, responding to forces such as population growth, demand for better hygiene, and advances in technology. The vastly invasive subway system, for example, was established in response to all three of these forces.⁷⁷

Various societies were formed in turn-of-the-century Paris to further both progress and preservation. Among the most significant were the Commission Municipale du Vieux Paris, founded in 1897, and its adversary, the Société du Nouveau Paris, which was established in 1902. Chaired by Justin de Selves, the new prefect of the Seine (this had been Haussmann's title), the Commission was organized by *amateurs* and historians to study, record, and above all preserve every remaining vestige of the old city;⁷⁸ its political conservatism

reflects the affinity of the antiquarian for the aristocrat's Paris. Frantz Jourdain was president of the Société, which campaigned against the Commission's “sterile cult of Archaeology,” condemning it as a reactionary extreme that would impede the emergence of the modern city.⁷⁹ In 1902 Jourdain also became the founding president of the liberal Salon d'Automne, which was established as a forum for new ideas in art and design, in direct opposition to the conservatism of the official Salons.

The preservationist wave epitomized by the Commission encouraged a dramatic rise in documentary photography—images of streets, buildings, architectural details, and signboards. The most memorable of

7.62 (opposite)

Eugène Atget
(1856–1927)

Entrance, Cour du
Dragon, 50 rue de Rennes,
1900

Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

7.63 (below)

Roger Bouvard
(1875–1961)

Façade, 37 quai Branly,
1910



these were taken by Eugène Atget. Many, like the image of a seventeenth-century portal at the Cour du Dragon (FIG. 7.62), were produced for sale to the Commission and related institutions, including the Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, both of which maintained archives of source material for architects and artisans.

Atget turned to photography in 1898, when he was forty, after abandoning the penury of his modest career as a stage actor. He devoted his years as a photographer

strictly to compiling a vast quasi-archaeological record of the streets of Paris, along with certain sites outside the city, such as the châteaux of Versailles, Saint-Cloud, and Sceaux.⁸⁰ *Vieux Paris* was as much Atget's subject as it had been Charles Marville's, who around 1860 had been assigned by Haussmann himself to record streets and buildings scheduled for demolition. Atget now photographed what remained. Marville's dark and dank streets may well have been intended to promote the need for urban renovation,⁸¹ whereas Atget's

7.64
Henri Sauvage
(1873–1932)
Façade, 22–28 rue Vavin,
1912



photographs seem to exude post-Haussmannian remorse. Years later, when he was “rediscovered” by the Surrealists, Atget insisted that his pictures were documents, not art. Indeed, as Molly Nesbit has discussed, Atget’s achievement was conditioned by the documentary *métier*, even if the archival nature of his work is mitigated by certain expressive effects.⁸² By choosing to permit obscuring shadows or glare, for example, or failing to crop distracting ambient detail, Atget subtly deviated from the technical and commercial demands of documentation, which is premised on an objective, somewhat abstract act of observation. As a result, his streets seem deserted rather than archivally undisturbed—lived in but abandoned. This quality has allowed Atget’s Paris to define for posterity a moment of transformation in the city’s history. Atget’s photographs are personal works, allowing the specter of transience to inflect the anonymity of their topographical gaze. Later, around 1910, when Atget recorded the filthy destitution of the *zone militaire* (open spaces on the outskirts of Paris once reserved for fortification but now occupied by shantytowns and ragpickers), a curious symmetry emerged in his work: like the relics of old Paris, members of the underclass had long been displaced by the hygienic geometry of Haussmann’s city plan, which had razed their congested streets.

The preservation of old Paris can be conveniently contrasted to the cultivation of new Paris, but modernization too was influenced by the historical and aesthetic concerns of the preservationist cause. Key figures in urban renewal, such as Jourdain and Eugène Hénard, believed strongly in balancing the demands of archaeology and reform, despite the fact that their modernizing ambitions are apt to appear unsparing. Between 1903 and 1909 Hénard developed large-scale proposals (never implemented) for an expanded road network in Paris, including double-level overpass intersections and an X-shaped bridge over the Seine. But Hénard also campaigned for augmented public parks, arguing for the conservation of undeveloped city spaces. After the exposition of 1900, he attempted (but failed) to prevent the municipal authorities from destroying the Galerie des Machines and selling off part of the Champ-de-Mars, which he advocated converting into an airfield for dirigibles, using the Galerie as

a hangar.⁸³ Though Hénard’s plans have Haussmannian (or pre-Corbusian, in the sense that they favor transportation technology over pedestrian traffic) grandeur, many were partly intended to soften the experience of the city. The airfield, for example, would have maintained the open, parklike quality of Champ-de-Mars. In his proposal for *alignements brisés*, apartment buildings along new boulevards would be placed diagonally to the street (rather than paralleling it), replacing the conventional alignment of façades with

7.65

Auguste Perret
(1874–1954)

Apartment house, 25 bis
rue Benjamin-Franklin,
1903–4



a zigzag perspective distinguished by diverse effects of light and space.

Actual changes in the physical nature of the Paris street were ultimately less dramatic. Apartment buildings flourished after 1900 (as a vehicle for new developments in luxury design, the bourgeois apartment house now equaled the aristocratic *hôtel*), and many residential blocks from the period reflect new municipal building codes. Prepared during the 1890s by Louis Bonnier, Hénard, and other architects working for a city commission, these regulations were issued in 1902. The updated design standards were aesthetically motivated, permitting buildings to attain much greater overall height (as much as thirty-nine feet [twelve meters]) and increased volume in the upper stories and the roof (which were set back to prevent them from darkening the street).

Essentially, this ordinance represented a civil codification of the picturesque. Breaking with Haussmann's authoritarian emphasis on a uniform overall effect, it sanctioned variety and stylistic eclecticism, a quality that had been previously tainted for new-wave purists by Second Empire pastiche. In this respect, the ordinance was related to the strategy of the annual municipal façade competition, which had been established by Bonnier in 1894 to encourage individuation. The results were distinctive, though more modest than Bonnier's bold vision of a stylistically eclectic, anti-Haussmannian streetscape.⁸⁴ Characterized by deep projections, taller roofs, and a proliferation of corner turrets, gables, and domes (FIG. 7.63), the new designs introduced a top-heavy profile and promoted a resurgence of historicism. Animating the walls and portals

7.66

Charles Girault
(1851–1932)

Grand Palais, 1896

In preparation for the
Exposition Universelle
1900



were elaborate ornamental relief sculpture, executed in established seventeenth- and eighteenth-century styles by decorative sculptors such as Pierre Seguin, Emile Derré, François Sicard, and Paul Gasq.⁸⁵ Rather than fulfill the promise of innovation on a large scale, the codes transformed façades into expressions of affluence and architectural bravura.

In more practical terms, the regulations did encourage an emerging preference for upper-story living. Taller buildings were endowed with elevators (as well as water and gas lines, signified by the plaques, still ubiquitous in Paris, that read “eau et gaz à tous les étages”), without which top floors had previously been scorned as too inconvenient. Easy access now allowed residents to enjoy the high-elevation benefits of increased light and air, an advantage augmented by pronounced bow

windows, which multiplied between the balconies that typically appeared on the third and sixth floors and remain an identifying characteristic of residential architecture from this period.

Turn-of-the-century developments in Parisian residential design are generally associated with the luxury market, but equally significant attempts were made to influence the direction of low-cost housing (which was becoming a profitable commercial venture in itself). The Société Française des Habitations à Bon Marché (French society for low-cost housing) was established in 1889, following the exposition. By the early 1900s close to two dozen companies were devoted to this market in Paris. One, managed by Frantz Jourdain, was developed by the entrepreneurial architect Henri Sauvage, whose organic Art Nouveau style—in works such as the

7.67

Charles Girault
(1851–1932)

Petit Palais, 1896



Loïe Fuller pavilion—had been succeeded by a pronounced rationalism. Sauvage's masterpiece was 22–28 rue Vavin (FIG. 7.64), a nine-story building with five floors of stepped terraces conceived and built between 1909 and 1912.⁸⁶ The stepped-terrace design permitted taller buildings without inhibiting the circulation of light and air at street level, thus conforming to the codes of 1902. Most important of all, it brought open-air hygiene to every residential floor (the design was adapted from a German sanatorium). Minimizing decorative features for the sake of cost, Sauvage's exteriors were relatively unadorned—and, as a result, much more proto-modern than most contemporary examples of luxury architecture. Sauvage clad the building entirely in white faïence subway tile, a uniform skin that liberates the façade from ornamentation or structural articulation. The surface is relieved only by spare sequences of blue tile that trim the terraces and window surrounds. Industrially produced, the tiles were inexpensive and easy to clean. They belong to the modern vernacular of technological style—not unlike iron-and-glass structures

such as the Galerie des Machines—rather than the costly craft tradition of Bigot's polychrome terra-cotta.

The social ambition of Sauvage's low-cost apartment block links it to the philosophical advances of Art Nouveau, while his reductivism veers from the bias toward luxury of Guimard, Lavirotte, and Bigot. Stylistically, the building is more properly compared to the work of Auguste Perret. The façade of Perret's apartment house at 25 bis rue Benjamin-Franklin (FIG. 7.65) is a boldly spare design, even if its economy of line is contradicted by Bigot's ubiquitous tile, here bearing an admittedly restrained floral motif. Erected in 1903, this building is the most sophisticated early application of reinforced concrete (which was also used in Baudot's Saint-Jean l'Évangéliste [see FIG. 7.61] and at 22–28 rue Vavin), an experimental technique that had only recently been perfected by the engineer François Hennebique, who named this advance after himself—the “système Hennebique.” Perret's apartment house is a landmark for allowing the frank articulation of structure to govern its design, an approach that would come to



7.68
Victor Laloux
(1850–1937)
Gare d'Orsay, 1900



7.69
Gare de Lyon
Second dining room,
Restaurant Le Train Bleu,
1900



characterize much modernist architecture between the wars. In its restrained clarity, Perret's rationalism (see also figure 8.33) also heralded a spare classical idiom that would, in various historicist and modernist guises, shape new architecture during the prewar period.

For the most part, however, the resurgence of the picturesque temporarily obstructed the trajectory of modern style—above all, by changing the fortunes of iron architecture in Paris. Undisguised metalwork remained essential to the construction of large, open architectural spaces—the light-filled spans of the exhibition hall and the train station, with their ceilings of clear glass. However, masonry now cloaked the structural skeleton with beaux-arts decor.⁸⁷ At the exposition of 1900, ironwork was reduced to a structural element with a vastly diminished stylistic presence. The fate of Dutert's *Galerie des Machines* (transformed with

masonry and plaster into the *Palais de l'Electricité*) was symbolic; similar proposals were actually considered for the Eiffel Tower. The *Grand Palais* (FIG. 7.66) and the *Petit Palais* (FIG. 7.67), both iron-and-glass exhibition spaces dressed in seventeenth-century classical costume, were designed by Charles Girault, who compared them to the *Trianon* palaces at Versailles (the *Petit Palais* has a pink marble colonnade modeled after the courtyard of the *Grand Trianon*). Both pavilions, which were dedicated to exhibitions of French art, were encrusted with sculpture, mosaic, and ceramic tile, all stylistically decorous enough to complement Gabriel's nearby *place de la Concorde*. Inside the *Petit Palais*, mural decoration was executed by prominent neotraditionalists, including Albert Besnard, Fernand Cormon, and Alfred-Philippe Roll. Significantly, among the allegories sculpted for the exterior of the *Grand Palais*,

7.70 (opposite)

Victor Laloux
(1850–1937) with André
Narjoux (1867–1934)

Crédit Lyonnais Bank,
rue du Quatre-Septembre
Interior view of the glass
rotunda, 1913



7.71

Louis Jean Résal
(1854–1919) and Amédée
Alby (1862–1942)

Pont Alexandre III,
1897–1900



7.72

Louis Jean Résal (1854–1919) and Amédée Alby (1862–1942)

Pont Mirabeau, 1893–96

the arts were represented by not only Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquity but also the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the eighteenth century, and Art Nouveau.

Victor Laloux's Belle Epoque design for the Gare d'Orsay (FIG. 7.68) was vastly preferred to Hénard's proposal, which included exposed-iron and ceramic decoration and was protested by the old-Paris preservationists.⁸⁸ Laloux softened the effect of iron and glass with a grandiose classicism borrowed from the late Baroque. Its masonry is deferential to palace manners: the station (which was converted into the Musée d'Orsay during the 1980s; see FIG. 9.145) faces Napoleon III's opulent extension of the Louvre across the river. Laloux conceived the structure as a union of two building types: the station itself, housing tracks and platforms, with its long, arcaded façade on the quai d'Orsay; and a receiving area, facing the rue Bellechasse, which descended from the prototype of the *hôtel*. Figuratively speaking, he transformed the train station into a palace, superimposing sumptuousness and ceremony onto utilitarian transportation. The tracks were submerged, with elevators and ramps facilitating the circulation of passengers and baggage; the new rail line was electrified, eliminating smoke and thus permitting lavish interior decoration.

New expectations of luxury were also conspicuous at the Gare de Lyon, which was rebuilt beginning in 1898 by the architect Denis Toudoire in order to accommodate a rising number of travelers on the Paris-Lyon-Marseilles line. Above all, the station restaurant, called Le Train Bleu (FIG. 7.69), made a lavish appeal to first-class tastes. Located on the second floor, it consists of two large and two small salons, each encrusted with gilded stucco work and emblazoned with murals representing destinations in France and abroad by a vast team of decorative painters, including period celebrities such as Gaston de la Touche and Henri Gervex. Both the Gare d'Orsay and the Gare de Lyon were completed in time to serve as antechambers for the exposition of 1900, which generated an enormous influx of tourists.

The modernized opulence that emerged around 1900 was limited in application; it represented a fantasy of privilege that failed to address the practical or rhetorical needs of most public architecture in a lasting way. However, it did find a logical extension in the Crédit Lyonnais bank on the rue du Quatre-Septembre (FIG.

7.70). Designed by Laloux, with André Narjoux, the new building augmented an existing structure by the architect William Bouwens van der Boijen. Passing through the large portal to the glass rotunda of the Hall des Titres and downstairs into the marble-and-onyx vault is an experience worthy of the fin de siècle fairground.

As for iron, it would fulfill its true aesthetic identity only as an instrument of the engineer, especially in the context of bridge building. There, as one observer wrote in 1900, science quite clearly served art and nature: by substituting open iron construction for the massiveness of stone, modern design allowed a bridge to traverse the river with the graceful trajectory of an arrow (reflecting the rapid passage of traffic from one bank to another); its transparency also permitted a less-obstructed view for passing pedestrians.⁸⁹ Much has been made of the Pont Alexandre III (FIG. 7.71), constructed for the exposition of 1900 and designed to commemorate the death of Czar Alexander on the occasion of a new alliance between Russia and France. The bridge was part of Hénard's master plan for the fairground, linking the Esplanade des Invalides on the left bank with the Grand Palais and Petit Palais on the right. Given the eighteenth-century origins of Franco-Russian exchange, the bridge is appropriately festooned with heavy neo-Rococo ironwork decoration—garlands, lampposts, putti, and the like; four tall stone piers with allegorical statuary give the structure an imposing ceremonial air. Here, again, iron is made to wear fancy dress.

Jean Résal and Amédée Alby, the engineers who designed the Pont Alexandre, were also responsible for the handsome Pont Mirabeau, which just preceded it in 1893–96 (FIG. 7.72). In this case, prominent allegorical statuary stands apart from the three-arched iron span, a sinewy exercise in structural grace. In contrast to the bloated exposition rhetoric embodied in the Pont Alexandre, the lean Pont Mirabeau is largely devoid of decorative nostalgia. Only a poet, Guillaume Apollinaire, could adorn this bridge with enduring sentiment, in his incantatory poem of love lost:

May the long days and the weeks go by
Neither the past
Nor former loves return
Under the pont Mirabeau flows the Seine

May night come and the hours ring
The days go by and I remain⁹⁰





P A I N T I N G : B O U R G E O I S S A L O N S T O B O H E M I A N M O N T M A R T R E

At the turn of the century, developments in urban reform reflected changing conceptions of the Parisian street. In pictorial art, Paris became an important setting for the work of a group of painter-illustrators called the Nabis. These artists adapted the innovations of Post-Impressionist painting to a bourgeois vision of the city that was decorative yet shrewdly—at times ironically—urbane.

The Nabi group—including Pierre Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Félix Vallotton, Kerr-Xavier Roussel, and Edouard Vuillard—emerged around 1890. The name *nabi*, which was derived from the Hebrew word for “prophet,” conferred sacred or mystical overtones on the new formalism. Regarding the visual devices of Cézanne and Gauguin as an ur-language of modern style, the group extrapolated a vocabulary of pattern, silhouette, and pure color; Maurice Denis paid homage to Cézanne in a painting of 1900 (FIG. 7.73) that includes portraits of Bonnard, Roussel, and Vuillard, as well as Paul Sérusier. Their art was to be decorative in a new sense. Denis wrote that “a painting—before being a warhorse, a nude woman or an anecdote of any kind—is essentially a flat surface covered with colors that are arranged in a certain order.”⁹¹ The artist was expected to bypass appearances and treat the picture to “subjective deformation,” distorting color and form for the sake of a “purely esthetic and decorative conception.” This emphasis on pictorial surface allowed easel painting to become increasingly abstract, but the Nabi idiom was also a language of sensibility; following the principle of Baudelairean “correspondences,” color and form (like music) were held to be capable of directly evoking spiritual or emotional states.

The precincts of Nabi painting, largely domestic and bourgeois, also relate to an extended definition of the decorative. Certain painters, including Denis, Roussel, and Vuillard exhibited in model rooms at Bing’s Maison de l’Art Nouveau. They also painted murals for private interiors. In this respect, the group is most closely

7.73
Maurice Denis
(1870–1943)
Homage to Cézanne,
1900
Oil on canvas,
70⁷/₈ x 94¹/₂ in.
(180 x 240 cm)
Musée d’Orsay



7.74
 Pierre Bonnard
 (1867–1947)
*Andrée Bonnard Playing
 Piano*, 1891
 Oil on canvas,
 14 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
 (37 x 32 cm)
 The Lefevre Gallery,
 London

identified with the patronage of the Natanson brothers. Naturalized Polish Jews, the Natanson family belonged to a rising—and often resented—segment of the Parisian *haute bourgeoisie*, outsiders whose claim to rank was based on financial entrepreneurship rather than old money or an elite French family name. Adam Natanson was an investment banker who moved his family to France, where they were eventually installed on the elegant avenue Friedland. His sons—Thadée, Alexandre, and Alfred—were founders of the bimonthly Symbolist periodical *La Revue blanche*, in which Nabi art was widely reproduced and discussed. Along with the *Mercure de France*, the *Revue* was the most advanced cultural journal of its day (*blanche*, or white, being the sum of all colors, signifies a receptivity to all contemporary cultural trends). Hosting authors such as André Gide, Stéphane Mallarmé, Marcel Proust, and Paul Valéry, its pages reveal the Natansons to have been brilliant connoisseurs of novelty and intellectual fashion; their approach was a facile but nevertheless exhilarating

boulevard aestheticism in which cultivated taste was measured by the assimilation of new ideas.

Even though young painters often affected a bohemian disdain for bourgeois materialism, their social aspirations and ambitious self-promotion brought them close to the life of the entrepreneur. The Nabis gathered at the *Revue blanche* editorial office on the rue des Martyrs and in the Natanson residences, where their work was hung. In particular, the artists often depicted themselves in the apartment of Thadée and his wife, Misia (née Godebski), on the rue Saint-Florentin near the place de la Concorde, and at Thadée's country house in Valvins (Mallarmé had a cottage nearby). A number of decorative suites were commissioned from Vuillard during the period, including *The Public Gardens* of 1894, a nine-panel ensemble for Alexandre Natanson and his wife, Olga Kahn, who occupied an *hôtel* near the Bois de Boulogne. The central triptych from this suite (FIG. 7.75) probably shows the Bois, one of several parks in the city that were developed under Haussmann.

Vuillard's muted palette and tapestry-like brush strokes flatten the composition, with its bare tracts of sun-dappled foreground space. Anecdote is minimized, in keeping with the artist's belief that too much specificity would grow tiresome in a domestic setting.⁹² As a designed and cultivated landscape—a place where nature and culture intersect—the park is an ideal metaphor for the Nabi interior, recurring often as a subject in their work.

Pictures by Bonnard and Vuillard also allude to the feminized neo-Rococo interior, where women often served an ornamental function, both literally and symbolically (FIG. 7.74). Such “feminization” applied

only to an aesthetic mode; there were no Nabi women artists. There was, however, a Nabi muse: Misia Natanson, an accomplished pianist, was an object of sentimental adoration within that charmed circle, and most of the painters included her in their work. Many exceptional small paintings by Vuillard also treat domestic subject matter from his own middle-class environment (FIG. 7.76). During this period the artist lived with his mother and unmarried sister in various apartments in Paris, out of which Madame Vuillard operated a corset- and dressmaking atelier. In his easel pictures Vuillard often showed the women engaged in their trade. The work was difficult, but the paintings

7-75

Edouard Vuillard
(1868–1940)

The Public Gardens,
1894

Distemper on canvas,
83 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 120 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.

(213 x 307 cm)
Musée d'Orsay



76

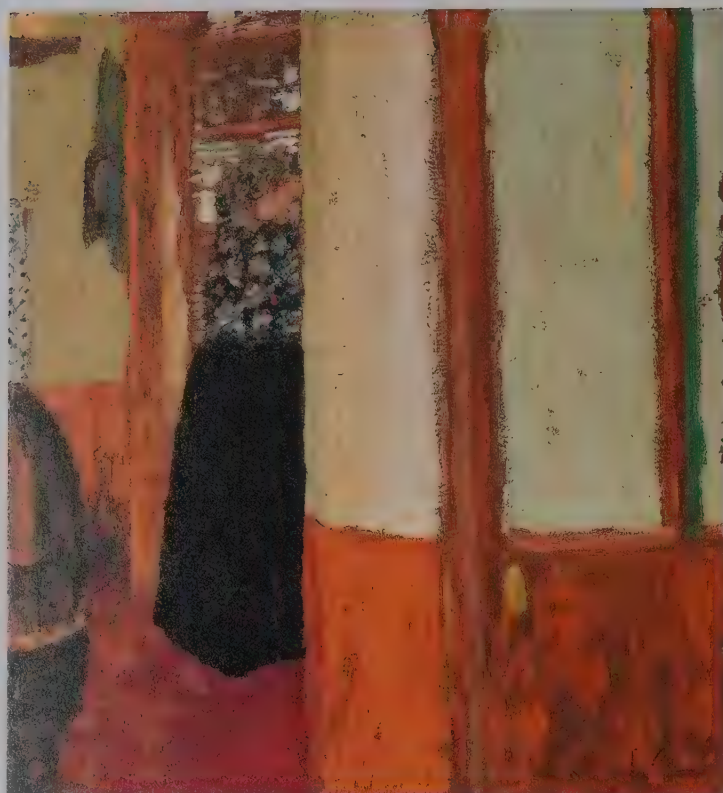
Edouard Vuillard
(1868–1940)

*Woman at the
Cupboard, 1895*

Oil on paper mounted
on wood, 14 5/8 x 13 1/8 in.

(37.1 x 33.3 cm)

Wallraf-Richartz-
Museum, Cologne



are not concerned with toil; by abstracting the interior as an accretion of flat patterns and ambiguously eliding planes, Vuillard deftly transformed it into an aesthetic realm. At the same time, the inhabitants of the apartment workshop—vague presences in an otherwise hermetic interior—imbue these pictures with an elusive psychological charge.

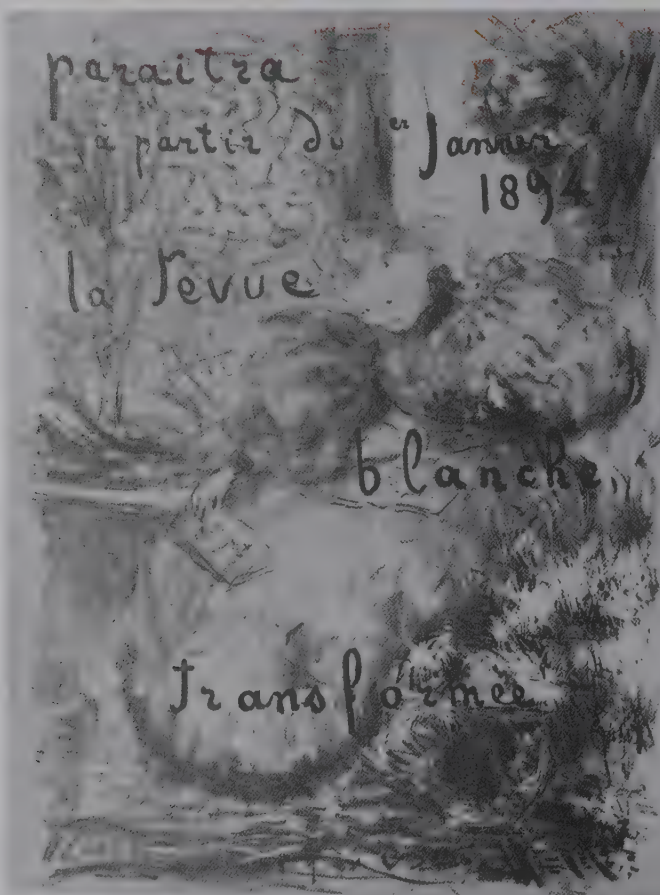
In Vuillard's *intimiste* interiors, figures, objects, and their environment converge, occupying the same material and spiritual plane. For the artist, a heightened experience of familiar surroundings could reveal a secret life within the inanimate world. Susan J. Sidlauskas has shown that Vuillard's vision was informed by his work on set design during the early to mid-1890s for the Théâtre de l'Art, directed by the poet Paul Fort, and for the Théâtre de l'Œuvre, founded by the actor-director Aurélien Lugné-Poë, who had originally shared a studio with Vuillard and Bonnard.⁹³ Other Nabis, including Paul Sérusier and Bonnard, also contributed to these experimental Symbolist productions, which were largely devoted to the plays of Gerhart Hauptmann, Henrik

77

Edouard Vuillard
(1868–1940)

Program for *Ames
solitaires* at the Théâtre
de l'Œuvre, 1893

Lithograph, 9 1/2 x
11 1/4 in. (23 x 32 cm)
Private collection





7.78

Kerr-Xavier Roussel
(1867-1944), design,
Louis Comfort Tiffany
(1848-1933), execution

The Garden, 1895

Stained glass, 48 3/4 x
36 7/8 in. (124 x 93 cm)
Private collection

Ibsen, Maurice Maeterlinck, and August Strindberg. Vuillard's stage decor does not survive, though his illustrated programs are themselves innovative evocations of mood (FIG. 7.77). Period descriptions reveal that Nabi sets were spare and murkily lit, creating a dream-like atmosphere in which indistinct figures merged with their shadowy milieus. This visual device, which reflected a new dramaturgical emphasis on spiritual conflict over mere narrative, italicized the psychological undertone of related effects in Nabi painting.

Given their devotion to the interior as subject, it is no surprise that the Nabis expended a good deal of energy on interior design. Wallpaper, stained glass, even porcelain, were all produced in conjunction with the luxury-craft revival of the 1890s. Denis's designs for wallpapers were exhibited in a Nabi group show and reproduced in the periodicals *L'Estampe originale* and *L'Art décoratif*, where they were hailed by Roger Marx (Denis used the wallpaper in his own home, but it never went into production). Stained-glass windows were created at the Tiffany workshop in New York after

designs commissioned by Bing from Bonnard, Roussel, Vuillard (FIG. 7.78), and others; and the windows were exhibited in 1895 at the Salon of the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts. As Marx noted, the medium was especially well suited to the Nabi simplification of pictorial form.⁹⁴

Nabi interest in the applied arts also brought new vitality to various genres of printmaking, including the illustrated book. Denis's volume *L'Amour*, dedicated to the artist's wife, Marthe, was published by Ambroise Vollard in 1899 (the artist had worked on the project over the course of seven years). Conforming to his own principles of illustration, the twelve color lithographs (FIG. 7.79) do not precisely correspond to the poetic text, a paean to sacred and profane love, but complement it with evanescent images of reverie that immortalize a sentimental feminine ideal.

Throughout the 1890s the Nabis held group shows at private galleries, such as Druet and Le Barc de Boutteville, and also exhibited in such makeshift venues as the offices of *La Revue blanche* and the foyer of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre. Despite the group affiliation, however, Nabi style is not entirely cohesive. Vallotton, in particular, stands apart; critics, including Thadée Natanson, recognized this and distinguished his work as cool and dry, even clinical. Vallotton's reductive realism owes more to Henri Rousseau, whom he greatly admired, than to the conventions of Post-Impressionism or the rhetoric of the Rococo. (The artist was a Swiss native, and his proclivities were also shaped by early schooling in the northern realist tradition.)

In contrast to Vuillard's, Vallotton's interiors are bourgeois set pieces with implied narratives (FIG. 7.80). The tales they almost tell are sinister but unclear. Dark shadows disturb the immaculate rooms of his urban bourgeois residences, where quarrels, trysts, and conspiracies appear to be taking place. Even the hour is obscure—is it nighttime or a drawn-curtain midafternoon? At every turn, descriptive specificity is undercut by unanswered questions. Vallotton's disquieting scenes have been compared to the *roman policier*, a genre of detective fiction popular at the time, as well as to other forms of society literature, with which the paintings share themes of bourgeois manners and sexual intrigue.⁹⁵ For this subject matter and mood, Vallotton's only true precursor is Degas's great *Interior* (1868–69;

7.79

Maurice Denis
(1870–1943)

*She Is More Beautiful
than Dreams*, from
L'Amour, 1899

Color lithograph,
16⅞ x 11¼ in.
(41.5 x 29.3 cm)
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France





Philadelphia Museum of Art), a masterpiece of dark narrative ambiguity. By contrast, however, Vallotton's figures are insubstantial role players or stylized types. An evasive yet distinct trace of irony, which is articulated by the deadpan demeanor of his dry style, constitutes the artist's modernity.

Pictorial wit and astute observation complement the decorative aspect of Nabi art and provide a less lofty element of sophistication in their work. Comedy abandoned the salon for the street, where the notational quality of Nabi style emerged as a form of shrewd visual slang. In *The Promenade* (FIG. 7.81), a four-panel folding screen, Bonnard created a visual pun between the dynamism of empty pictorial space that characterized Japanese art and the broad, vacant expanse of the modern city square. His recourse to caricature reveals that, not unlike Gauguin, the Nabis often used anticlassical

forms of figuration. Their sources were eclectic, with an emphasis on the silhouette: shadow-theater performances at the Chat Noir cabaret in Montmartre as well as Japanese and Chinese ink painting and the distortions of children's art.⁹⁶ In his poster for *La Revue blanche* (FIG. 7.82), Bonnard's caricatural approach to physiognomy and costume also masterfully serves as an agent of abstract design. The image, which would have hung in a store window or a kiosk, mirrors the street with a typology of passersby: the fashionable woman (probably Misia), who has purchased a copy of the review; a street urchin; and a well-fed bourgeois in an overcoat and top hat, whose back is turned. For all its sarcasm, the image is also good-natured, an untroubled representation of the street that shows Bonnard—like Vuillard, but unlike the anarchists of the period—to have been on comfortable terms with the urban scene.

7.80

Félix Vallotton
(1865–1925)

The Visit, 1899

Gouache on cardboard,
21 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 34 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(55 x 87 cm)
Kunsthau, Zurich





7.81

Pierre Bonnard
(1867-1947)

The Promenade, 1894

Tempera on canvas
with carved wooden
frame; four-panel
folding screen, each
panel: 57 ¼ x 17 ¼ in.
(147 x 45 cm); overall:
58 x 71 in. (147 x 180 cm)
Private collection



-82

Pierre Bonnard
(1867-1947)

Poster for *La Revue
blanche*, 1894

Color lithograph,
31" x 24" in.
(80 x 62 cm)

Bibliothèque d'Art
et d'Archéologie
Jacques Doucet

Bonnard's cast of characters was descended from an earlier iconographical tradition known as *physiologies de la rue*—illustrated books and broadsheets representing a repertoire of Parisians classified according to social or professional type. Vallotton augmented the same tradition with many of his own woodblock prints, including his cover illustration for *Badauderies Parisiennes: Les Rassemblements* (Parisian Curiosities: The Crowds; FIG. 7.83), a collection of street scenes by various writers (including Felix Fénéon, Gustave Kahn, and Thadée Natanson) that is specifically modeled on the *physiologies* genre. In these works Vallotton invented an epigrammatic graphic manner of ingenious comic facility. Every image manages to be as legible as a printed word but nonetheless sly and ambiguous. The only contemporary equivalent was a genre called *nouvelles en trois lignes* (news in three lines), composed by Fénéon for the newspaper *Le Matin* in 1906.

By squeezing banal or tragic tales of human interest into such a compact format, Fénéon allowed sarcasm to lurk behind the neutral reportage:

M. Colombe, from Rouen, killed himself with a bullet yesterday. His wife had shot him three times in March, and their divorce was pending.

For both Fénéon and Vallotton, irony issued from compression.

Most of the Vallotton's prints appeared without captions. At the height of the Dreyfus affair, which divided French society for a number of years, the artist created a succinct commentary on cafés, newspapers, and public opinion for the cover of *Le Cri de Paris* (FIG. 7.84), an illustrated bimonthly published by Alexandre Natanson. At the lower left one reader holds *L'Aurore*, which had printed Emile Zola's scathing indictment of the army in its campaign against Dreyfus, the Jewish officer who

7.83

Félix Vallotton
(1865–1925)

Cover for *Parisian
Curiosities: The Crowds*,
1896

Lithograph,
9 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(24 x 38 cm)

Galerie Vallotton,
Lausanne



had been falsely imprisoned for treason and upon whose fate many larger sociopolitical issues were hung. In a startling visual effect (pertinent to Vallotton's own stark opposition of black and white), the editor of the paper selected enormous bold type for the title, the phrase that Zola used to begin each of his allegations against the authorities: "J'accuse."

There is a certain resemblance between decorative simplification and caricature. Concerning the comic, the Nabis came closest to something like broad burlesque in their association with the writer Alfred Jarry, a destitute eccentric from the provinces who had infiltrated the Symbolist vanguard at the *Mercure de France*.⁹⁷ Jarry's mannered persona was distinguished by prodigality in all things—erudition, alcohol consumption, sexual boasts, and crude humor, all of which stood in contrast to Jarry's acutely artificial literary manner, which comprised formal language and a dryly detached tone of voice. A master of the absurd, Jarry invented the "science of 'Pataphysics,'" pertaining to "the laws that govern exceptions and will explain the universe supplementary to this one."⁹⁸ In 1896 Lugné-Poë mounted two performances of Jarry's play *Ubu Roi* at the Théâtre



Véritable portrait de Monsieur Ubu.

de l'Œuvre, for which several Nabis, including Bonnard and Vuillard, designed the decor. Ubu, a pear-shaped personification of witless grandiloquence, was derived from a character that Jarry had created as a schoolboy. The production, which mystified and scandalized most of the critics (the opening line was "Merdre!"—almost, but not quite, the French word for *shit*), has since become a classic of proto-absurdist theater. In his instructions to Lugné-Poë, Jarry called for a life-size puppet play, or *guignol*, using minimal sets and masks. He wanted the farce to attain an abstract or universal quality rather than suggest a particular time or place; the action, he said, transpired in "Poland, which is to say: Nowhere." One observer described the Nabi decor as a childlike representation contrived to be both an interior and a landscape. Jarry himself depicted Ubu in several primitivizing styles: lithographs with a childish scrawl and crude woodcuts that resemble the folk-art manner of the *image d'Epinal* (FIG. 7.85). Ubu was privately re-created in 1898 as an actual *guignol* at the Théâtre des Pantins, a puppet theater devised by Jarry, Franc-Nohain, and the pianist Claude Terrasse (who was Bonnard's brother-in-law).

Jarry revealed that the bourgeois Nabis possessed a bohemian id, and this is confirmed by Henri de



Dessin de F. Vallotton

L'AGE DU PIER

7.85 (far right)

Alfred Jarry
(1873–1907)

Program for *Ubu Roi*,
1897

Lithograph
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

7.84

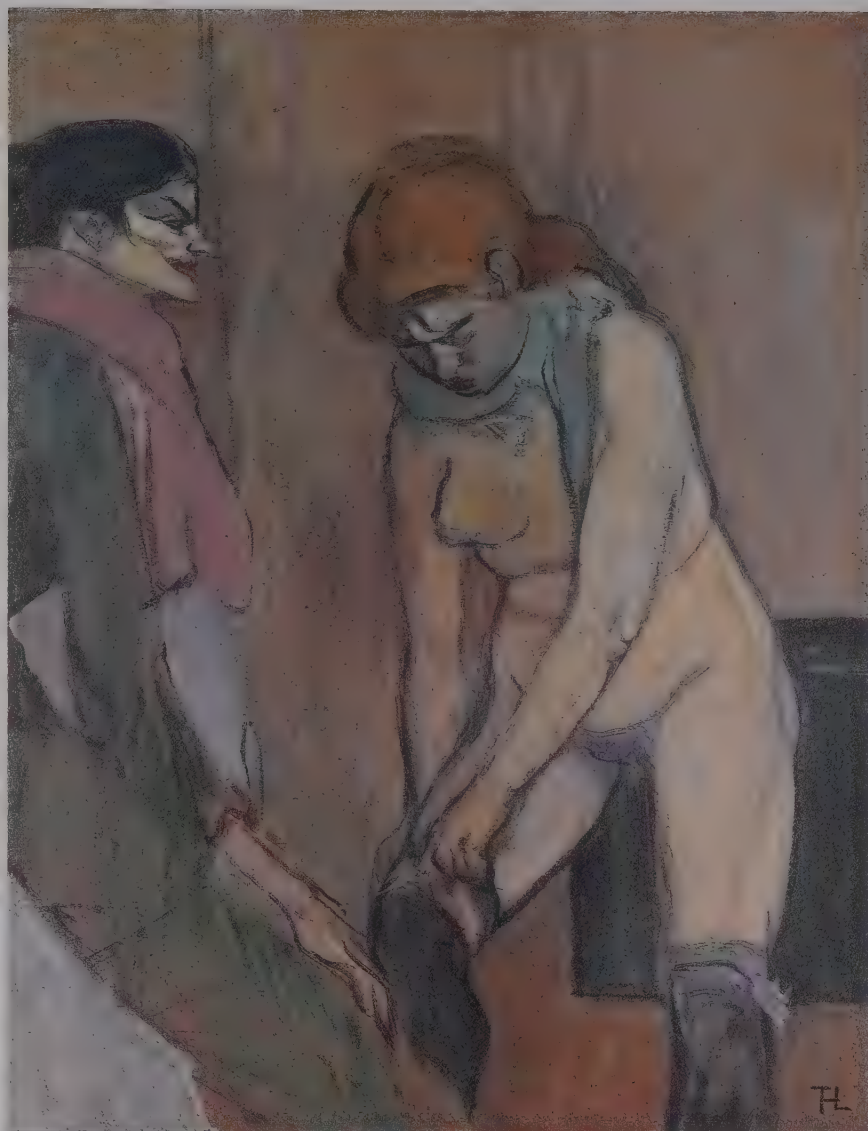
Félix Vallotton
(1865–1925)

The Age of Paper, cover
for *Le Cri de Paris*,
January 23, 1898

Lithograph
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

Toulouse-Lautrec, who was a member of the Nabi inner circle. Born into an aristocratic world of beauty and privilege, Lautrec became obsessed with the seamy underside of Paris nightlife in the cabarets and dance halls of Montmartre, an arena of inverted norms where eccentricity, vulgarity, and exploitation were the predominant means of social exchange, both onstage and off. His physical condition—stunted growth due to a childhood accident—probably influenced his affinity for the alienated and dispossessed, though one should resist romanticizing Lautrec’s astute appreciation of the demimonde as a hothouse of duplicity and artifice. Such masquerades were ideal material for Lautrec, who had a clinical eye for observation and a deft hand for the Art Nouveau whiplash line. His use of caricature was more trenchant and less decorative and urbane than Bonnard’s: in his work a fairly bestial human nature is shown to have a shaping effect on gesture and physiognomy. The result was almost certainly intended to approximate the coarse language of the *declassé*, a vulgar and imagistic argot that was widely spoken in cabarets and brothels and in which Lautrec was extremely well versed.

In some paintings, such as the great *At the Moulin Rouge* (FIG. 7.87), Lautrec exploited the same cropped spatial dynamics as Degas’s to create an unsettling spectacle of fin de siècle vice, but his genius belonged primarily to the graphic arts. In poster making, Lautrec attained a startling command of composition and a type of silhouette that was both sinuous and blunt, and he was immediately recognized as an original master of design. By the 1890s Lautrec’s Montmartre was already a thoroughly commercialized entertainment and red-light district; its singers, dancers, and prostitutes were a jaded and exploited society of exhibitionists, including the legendary Jane Avril, Aristide Bruant, La Goulue (FIG. 7.88), Yvette Guilbert, and Valentin Le Désossé—a “boneless” dancer whose undulating contortions represent the dark side (in contrast to the luminous Loïe Fuller and Sarah Bernhardt) of the Art Nouveau stage. Bruant, who owned the cabaret Le Mirliton, was his own featured act, singing droll and tragic songs in local slang about thugs, prostitutes, and the wretched poor; in their voice (or such, at least, was the conceit of his sentimentalized repertoire), he notoriously berated his bourgeois clientele, who paid return visits for the



privilege and made him rich.

As Jerrold Seigel has shown, Bruant’s cabaret (and its prototype, the Chat Noir) became something like a bohemian theme park, transformed by both Parisians and out-of-towners for whom nocturnal slumming on the butte was an adventure in transgressing the boundaries of bourgeois propriety. Indeed, monologues and songs in back-alley slang were in such vogue during the 1890s that they turned the underclass into a staple of the entertainment industry. Seigel also notes that many of these cabarets were platforms for poets and writers attempting to reach a rising middle class by marketing the aura of old Paris, which the ramshackle, even rural

7.86

Henri de
Toulouse-Lautrec
(1864–1901)

*Woman Pulling up
Her Stocking*, 1894

Oil on cardboard,
22¾ x 18⅞ in.
(58 x 48 cm)
Musée d’Orsay



7.87 (above)
 Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901)
At the Moulin Rouge, 1892–93
 Oil on canvas, 48 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 55 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (123 x 141 cm)
 The Art Institute of Chicago; Helen Birch
 Bartlett Memorial Collection

7.88 (opposite)
 Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864–1901)
 Poster for the Moulin Rouge (La Goulue), 1891
 Color lithograph, 76 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 48 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (195 x 122 cm)
 Irene and Howard Stein, Atlanta

quality of Montmartre still seemed to evoke, and by catering to bourgeois nostalgia for the romanticized milieu of the poet as defiant outcast.⁹⁹ As it turns out, countercultural literary societies, with eccentric names like Hydropathes, Hirsutes, and Zutistes, were mostly populated by future members of the civil service and professional class, for whom garret life in Montmartre was an oat-sowing rite of passage (one that only occasionally led to genuine dissolution). However, the entertainment scene was only partly occupied with debased versions of popular theater. Even though the milieu was often represented as a poisonous one (or by Seurat, in *Chahut* [see FIG. 7.7], as one of quasi-parodic modernity), these and other visions of the cabaret or dance hall were based on the belief that popular performances could also be enthralling.

Like Lautrec, Théodore-Alexandre Steinlen trafficked in Bruant's world, but his irony was a tool of social conscience. Steinlen created images for many of the new illustrated periodicals, which were primarily devoted to social commentary and the entertainment scene: *Le Courrier français*, *Le Mirliton*, *Le Rire*, *Gil Blas illustré*, *Le Chambard socialiste*, and the anarchist review *La Feuille*, among others. Steinlen's commitment was expressed through a frank naturalism, which was animated by caricatural simplifications inherited from Honoré Daumier. His illustrations were generally devoted to the proletariat of Montmartre—workers, prostitutes, vagrants, and members of the underworld—whom he depicted as victims of injustice and grinding poverty, a socialist vision that he shared with Zola. In his poster for Zola's *Paris* (see FIG. 7.1), an epic novel about the dark idealism of the anarchist movement, Steinlen envisioned humanity rising toward Montmartre in a crushing tide of violence and greed. In the background is the unfinished church of Sacré-Cœur, begun in 1871 as a memorial to the losses of the Commune (Zola's protagonist plots to bring it down with a bomb on the day of its dedication). Possibly related to Rodin's sketches for *The Gates of Hell* (see FIG. 7.40), Steinlen's swelling horde also invokes turn-of-the-century crowd theory, a popular social psychology of mob behavior and mass hysteria.¹⁰⁰ Few pictures match this sweeping urban panorama for a malevolent inversion of Belle Époque Paris. Rhetorical grandiloquence was not Steinlen's customary voice, however; his illustrations

more often chronicled the socioeconomic inequities on Montmartre's mean streets (FIG. 7.89).

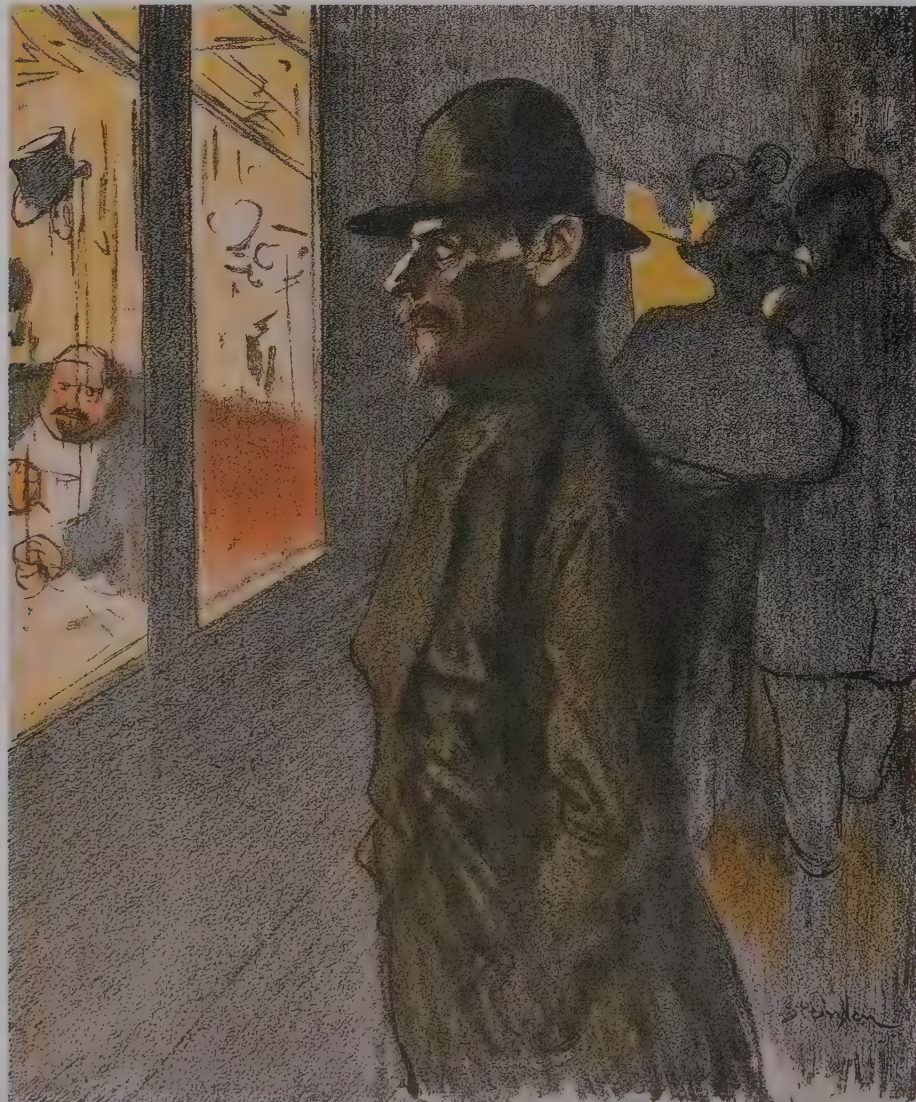
It was within this world of bohemian Montmartre that Pablo Picasso moved when he visited Paris from Barcelona and Madrid at the turn of the century, finally



settling there in 1904. At first his circle was largely composed of fellow Catalans, though his charisma would soon attract Parisian confreres, most notably the poets Guillaume Apollinaire, Max Jacob, and André Salmon. Picasso's peculiar genius manifested itself as a commanding appetite: he absorbed the conventions and mannerisms of other artists as rapidly as he manufactured his own. By 1901 this had already been recognized by one critic in the *La Revue blanche*, who reviewed Picasso's exhibition at Vollard's gallery; by 1907, when Picasso painted *Les Femmes d'Alger* (see FIG. 7.101), Degas, Toulouse-Lautrec, van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin, Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Diego Velázquez, El Greco, and Manet, among others, could

all be discerned in his work. Ultimately, the artist transformed pastiche into an instrument of discovery, and his capacity for assimilation and invention would always impress those around him.

Picasso's *Self-Portrait* (FIG. 7.90) from this period is a stark image of destitution and self-pity, but it is also a quasi-mythic one—the image of a young artist whose life in the lower depths was a defiant bohemian dare. The palette is a striking salvo of blue, a color that would dominate his painting for several years. Many of these pictures were painted in Barcelona, where blue prevailed in the work of other fin de siècle artists who were painting somber images of poverty and despair. But Picasso used blue like a form of dialect that united his subjects



7.89

Théodore-Alexandre
Steinlen (1859–1923)

The Wretched Man,
cover illustration for
Gil Blas Illustré,
November 19, 1897

Jane Voorhees Zimmerli
Art Museum, Rutgers,
The State University of
New Jersey; acquired
with the Herbert D. and
Ruth Schimmel Museum
Library Fund



7.90
Pablo Picasso
(1881-1973)
Self-Portrait, 1901
Oil on canvas,
31 ⁷/₈ x 23 ¹/₁₆ in.
(81 x 60 cm)
Musée Picasso



7.91

Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)

*Family of
Saltimbanques*, 1905

Oil on canvas,
83¼ x 90½ in.
(212.8 x 229.6 cm)

National Gallery of Art,
Washington, D.C.;
Chester Dale Collection



as if they were all members of the same clandestine society. This device can be compared to the slang spoken by the underclass of this period; sometimes referred to as a *langue verte*, or “green language,” it comprised vulgar but complex codes that were intended to shut out the prying attention of the police, signifying the milieu as a community unto itself. The sentimentality of Picasso’s Blue period pictures makes it clear that he was never interested in social realism per se. In his self-serving apotheoses of the outcast, prostitutes and blind beggars were objects of curiosity and fear, the huddled absinthe drinker a sentry at the gates of romantic melancholia. The homeless are rootless and unconstrained; hunger breeds the delirium of the prophet or visionary. This appropriation of the underclass was inherited from a modern philosophical and poetic tradition that included Baudelaire, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Paul Verlaine. It would culminate in Picasso’s œuvre with the itinerant fairground acrobats, or *saltimbanques*, that he depicted in 1904–5, characters who represent artistic genius as a state of social and spiritual alienation.

By this time Picasso’s palette had become roseate, a muted coloration that gives his attenuated, sparsely modeled figures an archaic air (recalling Puvis’s chalky frescolike manner). Picasso’s masterpiece of this period is the large *Family of Saltimbanques* (FIG. 7.91). It is a measure of how fully Picasso projected his own life onto the protagonists of his work that he depicted himself (at the far left) as a member of this wistful troupe. Suspended in an existential tableau, they stand on the wasteland of Montmartre or some other marginal zone of the city where carnival entertainers often performed. Picasso shows himself in the costume of Harlequin, the first of many times that he would identify with this commedia dell’arte figure, a trickster who also turned up in Apollinaire’s poetry, wielding occult power.¹⁰¹ Contemporary accounts often associated fairground performers with cunning and deceit; they were portrayed as a closed confederacy that was partly defined by their capacity to mystify outsiders as well as dazzle them. This duality would forever be central to Picasso’s work.

Picasso’s entire Rose period is a paean to the theme and the myth of bohemian community—a poetic conceit that had intimate personal significance, for his early work is densely populated with friends and lovers as well as the delinquents and outcasts he knew in



7.92
Maurice Utrillo
(1883–1955)
*The Cabaret at the
Lapin Agile*, c. 1910
Oil on canvas, 19 ¹¹/₁₆ x
24 in. (50 x 61 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

Montmartre. His immediate circle, which would soon include the painter Georges Braque, came to be known as the “bande à Picasso,” probably in reference to the bands of thugs and anarchists who prowled the winding streets of the neighborhood. The kinds of places they occupied were clubhouses of the avant-garde: Picasso’s studio at 13 rue Ravignan, in a squalid firetrap nicknamed the Bateau-Lavoir, or “laundry barge”; the bistros Chez Azon and Chez Vernin, where their credit was

always good; and the Cabaret du Lapin Agile (formerly Aux Assassins, an inn dating from the 1860s with a putatively shady past).

The Lapin Agile was already a shrine when it was immortalized in 1910 by the painter Maurice Utrillo (FIG. 7.92), whose compound of alcoholism and touristic scene painting incarnated the bohemian Montmartre of bad novelettes and Hollywood movies. At the cabaret, performers read ballads by the fifteenth-century poet

François Villon, whose satiric and elegiac *Grand Testament* was composed in the dense slang of the Coquillars, a criminal society to which the poet had belonged. For a time, members of the Picasso band constituted a circle of Villonistes, attending lectures on the poet presented at the Sorbonne in the winter of 1904–5 by Marcel Schwob, the first scholar to produce a modern translation (Jarry had dedicated *Ubu Roi* to Schwob). After class they would adjourn to seedy cafés and bars nearby on the rue de Buci and the rue Grégoire-de-Tours, grimy Latin Quarter hangouts that were said to be infused with Villon's spirit. Villon's example would have been irresistible to Picasso, that of a poet and street tough whose verse, written in an autobiographical voice, was indecorous and intensely personal. In fact, members of the Picasso circle, many of them poets, appear to have spoken their own joking, hybrid slang that was intended to heighten the exclusivity of the group.

Fauvism

The avant-garde is a slippery phenomenon. Generally taken to connote an affront to bourgeois aesthetic conventions and the expectations of the art public, the term promotes a notion of qualitative progress that is only tenuously useful for understanding aesthetic change. It also implies a certain programmatic intent on the part of young artists that is rarely justified by the historical record. The Symbolist confraternities, for example, certainly influenced the formation of groups such as the *bande à Picasso*; Symbolism was also the obvious prototype for the “isms” of prewar Paris, most notably Cubism and related schools, with their manifestos and promotional magazines. But even though these groups are all understood to constitute detachments of the so-called avant-garde, most of them represent widely different social agendas and philosophies of art. Consequently, it is virtually impossible to define an avant-garde program except in loosely oppositional terms (as a broad socioaesthetic critique of dominant bourgeois culture, according to the classic definition¹⁰²). It is equally important to emphasize that every definition comes equipped with exceptions that prove fatal to the rule.

Nonetheless, in the mythology of modern art the concept of the avant-garde has proved both permanent

and useful, for it designates a movement of rapid, often wrenching change. Strictly speaking, for example, there was no *bande à Matisse*, though Fauvism now appears to have been something of the kind, at least according to all the controversy it generated in the press. The artists—including Henri Matisse, André Derain, Maurice de Vlaminck, Charles Camoin, Albert Marquet, and Kees van Dongen—exhibited regularly, and often to startling effect, at the Salon d'Automne and the Salon des Indépendants. Since Matisse was the eldest by far, he was addressed as a leader of the school, although they all worked together only occasionally. The designation *fauve*, or “wild beast,” was invented by the critic Louis Vauxcelles, who reviewed their work in the now-celebrated Salle VII at the 1905 Salon d'Automne. Referring to pictures such as Matisse's *Woman with a Hat* (FIG. 7.93), Vauxcelles used the term to characterize a bold—and presumably “savage”—colorism employing pure or unmixed hues. It is one measure of the conflicted reception of advanced painting during the period that other critics of Salle VII characterized the distortions of the new style as reflecting either childlike ineptitude or excessive cerebrality.

Fauve technique somewhat resembles that of Neo-Impressionism, an important and immediate antecedent. Paul Signac and Matisse painted together in Saint-Tropez during the summer of 1904 (Signac was president of the Société des Artistes Indépendants, where Matisse was a new member). But Fauve painting might be better characterized as an extrapolation of lessons from Cézanne, Gauguin, and van Gogh, which Matisse and the others used to free themselves from Seurat's concern with the optical effects of natural light. It is fitting that both Seurat and van Gogh were given posthumous retrospective exhibitions at the Salon des Indépendants in 1905, the year of high Fauvism. Ultimately, the Post-Impressionists enabled these painters to construct with color and to merge color and line. No longer primarily descriptive, the Fauve painted image was subordinate to the pictorial elements that composed it; color, design, and the variegated calligraphy of the brush retain their autonomous identity at all times.

Fauvism is most commonly thought of as a landscape school, but portraiture in the style reveals an urban aspect that is especially relevant to Paris. Matisse's *Woman with a Hat* was painted shortly before the opening of



7.93

Henri Matisse
(1869-1954)

Woman with a Hat,
1905

Oil on canvas,
31 3/4 x 23 1/2 in.

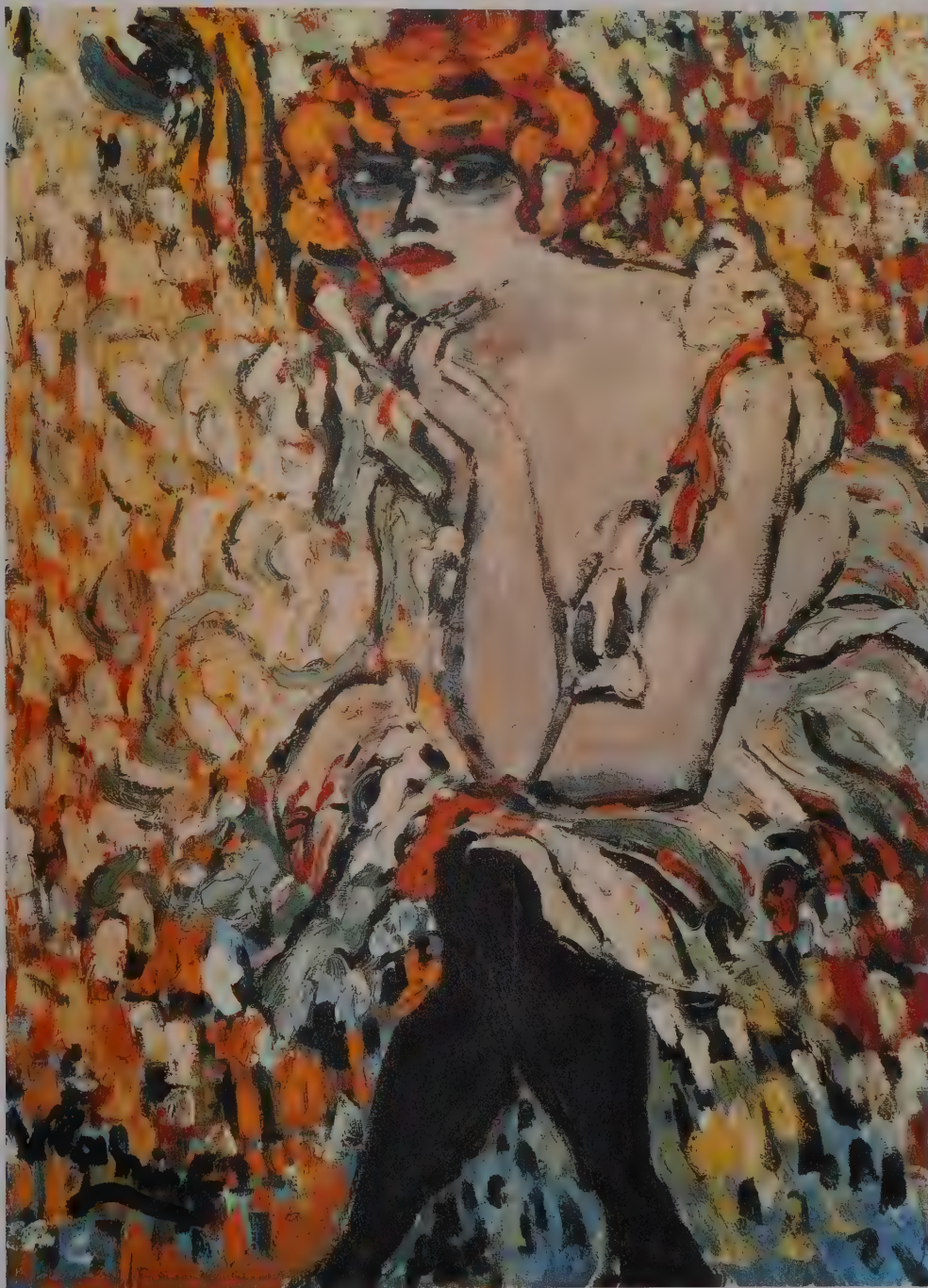
(80.6 x 59.7 cm)

San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art;
bequest of Elise S. Haas

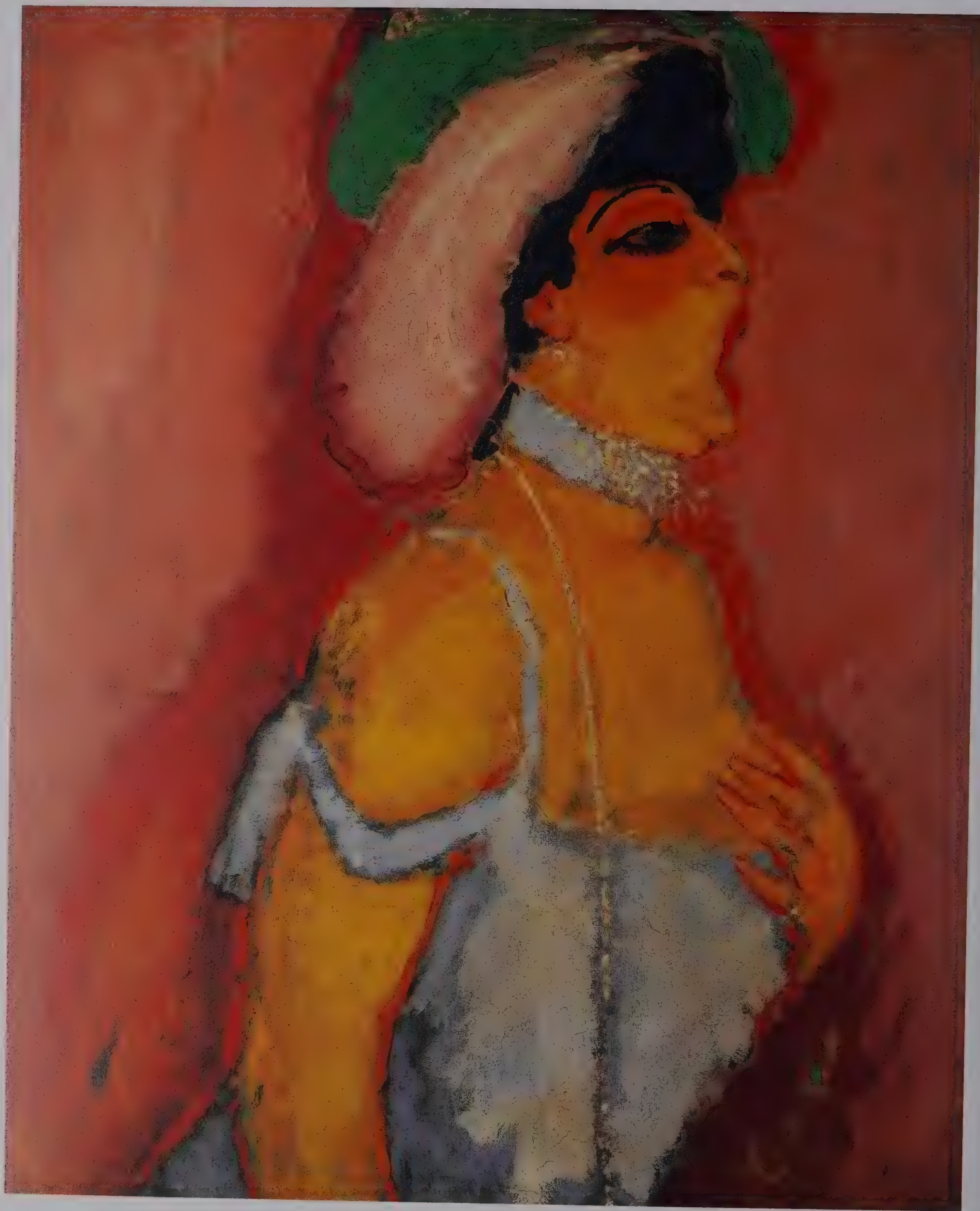
the 1905 Salon d'Automne, upon the artist's return from a critical season of landscape painting in the south. Indeed, its palette and exuberant application of paint directly recall the liberties of Matisse's seaside views at Collioure. *Woman with a Hat*, a portrait of the artist's wife, Amélie, was almost rejected by the Salon jury as an assault on the decorous conventions of portraiture, and

it is among the most astonishing works to have emerged from the Fauve scandal of 1905. Leo Stein, who purchased it out of the Salon for 500 francs, later called it "the nastiest smear I had ever seen."¹⁰³

This portrait is an aggressively unorthodox characterization of the Parisian bourgeoisie; Mme Matisse's ostentatious hat was perhaps partly intended to provoke



7.94
Maurice de Vlaminck
(1876–1958)
Dancer at the Rat Mort,
1906
Oil on canvas,
28¾ x 25⅜ in.
(73 x 64 cm)
Private collection



critics who had been deriding recent developments in painting as mere vagaries of fashion. (Matisse did not concern himself with the iconography of Paris itself until he painted views of and from his studio on the quai Saint-Michel, beginning in 1914; see figure 7.160.) Portraits by other Fauves, however, clearly do incarnate their attention to Parisian popular culture, taking as much from Toulouse-Lautrec as from van Gogh or Gauguin. Vlaminck's work, which was also on view in Salle VII, was devoted largely to the landscape of the Paris suburb of Chatou, but his *Dancer at the Rat Mort* (FIG. 7.94) is an explosive example of the new potential that coloristic excess—heightened by the bravura of the broken brush—might hold for subjects from the demimonde. Vlaminck can also be compared to Picasso, whose splashy pre-Blue period depictions of related figures anticipate Fauve portraiture.¹⁰⁴ Kees van Dongen, a neighbor of Picasso's in the Bateau-Lavoir

during 1906, learned a more specifically theatrical lesson from the new colorism. Van Dongen, almost exclusively a figure painter, applied the liberties of Fauve color to bohemian nightlife in Montmartre, wholly removed from the plein air preoccupations of the other artists. His depictions of brothels, cabarets, and dance halls, such as his costume portrait of the cross-dressing singer Modjesko (FIG. 7.99), were invariably garish. They call to mind the poisonous green face in Lautrec's *Moulin Rouge* (see FIG. 7.87), although van Dongen established a less lurid correlation between pictorial style and the gaudy spectacle of ambiguous sexual identity, painting as if high-key coloration were best suited not to the sunlit landscape but to the gaslit stage.

The Fauve landscape may seem far removed from the artificiality of van Dongen's travesty portrait, but the riverbanks and seashores by Matisse, Derain, and the others have their own elements of explicit artifice. In

7.95 (opposite)

Kees van Dongen
(1877–1968)

Modjesko, Soprano Singer,
1907

Oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 32 in.
(100 x 81.3 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. R  bel

7.96 (below)

Andr   Derain (1880–1954)

The Seine at Chatou, 1904–5

Oil on canvas,
27 3/4 x 43 1/2 in.
(70.5 x 110.5 cm)

Kimbell Art Museum,
Fort Worth, Texas





7.97
Henri Matisse
(1869–1954)
Oil study for *The Joy of Life*, 1905–6
Oil on canvas,
16⅞ x 21½ in.
(40.6 x 54.6 cm)
San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art; bequest
of Elise S. Haas

addition to Chatou (FIG. 7.96) and other towns along the Seine, this body of work was devoted to excursion sites: the south of France, at Collioure and Saint-Tropez; parts north, such as Normandy; London, in Derain's case, with an emphasis on the Thames; and (in later, post-Fauve paintings by Derain and Matisse), primitive or arcadian landscapes of the European imagination.

Matisse conceived his astonishing *Bonheur de vivre* (Barnes Foundation, Merion, Pennsylvania) in 1905, using a Collioure landscape as the setting for a Dionysian pastoral that was intended to transcend the specificity of any time or place. The artist's developing manner, a composite of calligraphic strokes and patches of color, is also revealed in a dynamic oil sketch for *Bonheur* (FIG. 7.97), which was exhibited in Matisse's one-man show at the Druet gallery in the spring of 1906. This small landscape—populated with dancers, bathers, and lovers—already alludes to the prismatic colorism that Matisse would achieve in his final canvas. In *Bonheur* itself, he applied the new idiom on an imposing scale. (As large as a conventional Salon *machine*, the work required him to rent a special studio in the Couvent

des Oiseaux, an ex-convent on the rue de Sèvres.) *Le Bonheur de vivre* is ambitiously synthetic, as Jack Flam has observed, consulting various traditions from Cézanne to the Persian miniature.¹⁰⁵ It is also virtually incoherent by the narrative and stylistic standards of its day. When it was exhibited at the Indépendants in 1906 (simultaneously with the Druet show), the critics responded by treating the picture as a failure of impressive proportions. Nonetheless, it remains one of the period's greatest pictorial gambits, a dazzling narrative of profane love that is intimately felt yet violently decorative on a monumental scale.

Primitivism

In Matisse's titles, words such as *luxe* and *bonheur* characterize his approach to the exotic allure of non-Western culture and even connote that art itself is an act (or a sublimation) of sensual fulfillment. Beginning in 1904, and intermittently throughout his career, the artist chose subjects that reflected the conventional

Western longing for an abstract arcadia, represented by the “uncivilized” female denizens of North Africa and Polynesia (he visited both places during the prewar period). As we have seen with Gauguin, this approach has a colonialist aspect, since it is often based on the romance of a subjugated race as noble savages. Matisse’s women occupy a mythologized “natural” state, although his work is often devoid of easy sensuality, as a difficult picture like *Blue Nude (Souvenir of Biskra)* amply attests (FIG. 7.98). The title of the work, which was exhibited at the Indépendants in the spring of 1907, alludes to the artist’s trip to North Africa in 1906 and to the nostalgia of colonial tourism, but the picture’s Cézannesque formal ambitions abandon the seductive conventions

of Romantic exoticism. This new style was also shaped by Matisse’s experiments with figural sculpture during this period, although the sculptures recall the body types of Baule and Fang statuettes, which are sub-Saharan rather than North African. His sculptures were modeled, not carved, and they have little formal rapport with tribal objects, which he and other members of the Parisian avant-garde were just beginning to collect from secondhand shops in and around Paris. The dynamic torsion and reductive form borrowed from his sculpted figures give *Blue Nude* a contorted monumentalism. The odalisque’s twisted body, which aggressively flattens the landscape space that contains it, frustrates the seductive tradition from which the pose was taken. Truculent,

7.98

Henri Matisse (1869–1954)

Blue Nude (Souvenir of Biskra), 1907

Oil on canvas, 36¼ x 55¼ in.
(92.1 x 140.4 cm)

Baltimore Museum of Art;
The Cone Collection, formed
by Dr. Claribel Cone and
Miss Etta Cone of Baltimore



densely worked, and vigorously crude, *Blue Nude* was both admired and despised at the Salon.

Matisse never fully applied the modernist formal implications of so-called primitive and archaic sculpture, which he admired, to his own sculpture. However, others did reinvent sculpture in this way during the period—above all, the Romanian artist Constantin Brancusi, who exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants between 1910 and 1913.¹⁰⁶ Brancusi was one of many émigrés who went to Paris to study art, settling in the bohemian community of Montparnasse, which was known at the time as a low-rent district of run-down studio space and cheap cafés. In Romania, he had

been trained in wood carving, as part of a program in the decorative arts, as well as in academic modeling. Continuing formal study in Paris, he carved marble as an assistant in Rodin's studio for a brief time in 1907. Brancusi ultimately pursued an alternative tradition, represented by an eclectic variety of sources, including sculpture from Africa, Asia, ancient Egypt, and Assyria, all of which he could observe in some quantity in Paris museums, as well as from the folk art of his native Romania. To the modern eye searching for an alternative to the rhetoric of public sculpture and the refinements of modeling and casting in Rodin, these sources shared a bold, sometimes brute physical presence that was



799

Constantin Brancusi
(1876–1957)

*The Kiss (Montparnasse
Cemetery)*, 1909

Limestone, 35¼ x 12 x 8 in.
(89.5 x 30 x 20 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre Georges
Pompidou



7.100

Constantin Brancusi
(1876-1957)

*Magic Bird (Pasarea
Maiastra)*, first version,
1910

White marble, height:
22 in. (55.9 cm), on
three-part limestone
pedestal, height: 70 in.
(177.8 cm), of which
the middle section is his
Double Caryatid
(c. 1908). Overall:
92 x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.
(233.7 x 32.5 x 27.1 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York;
Katherine S. Dreier
bequest

derived from the technique of direct carving. For Brancusi as well as other sculptors of the epoch throughout Europe, simply carved wood and stone represented an expression of aesthetic faith, in which reductive geometric form was equated with integrity and candor, even truth. In Brancusi's case, the results strike a remarkable balance between the raw and the refined.

Ancient sources certainly lie behind Brancusi's earliest works executed in this new manner, including *The Kiss*, first conceived in 1907–8, which transforms an embrace into a coupling of primal forms that is blunt and almost caricatural, especially compared to Rodin's renowned treatment of the subject from 1898. Like most of Brancusi's motifs, *The Kiss* had several incarnations, including a full-length version that, in late 1911, was used as a tomb sculpture for a young Romanian woman buried in the cemetery of Montparnasse (FIG. 7.99). Brancusi's interest in exotic themes emerged during this period in various figures of sacred or mythic origin, such as *Maiastrea*, named for a miraculous bird from Romanian folklore. The first version of this subject (FIG. 7.100) stands atop a composite base made up of limestone blocks and a roughly carved caryatid. The artist's bases, remarkable achievements in compressed abstract form, were interchangeable parts in a series of continually recombined wholes.

Picasso achieved a related innovation in 1906, when he gradually abandoned the insubstantial figuration of his fin de siècle manner for a weighty alternative partly based on the schematic stylizations of ancient Iberian sculpture. Ultimately, his classicism was archaic rather than refined. In the summer of 1906 Picasso pursued the Iberian model on native soil, sojourning with his companion, Fernande Olivier, in the small Spanish mountain village of Gósol. He populated his pictures with increasingly stocky male and female nudes displaying the reductive qualities of archaic form. In their sturdiness, these figures resemble those by Brancusi, and in both artists' work, this quality is sustained by a degree of sexual androgyny.¹⁰⁷ In Picasso's work, however, no sooner was this physical solidity established than it was undone. In 1907 he introduced a fragmented approach to form that was partly based on sources in African art.

The role of race in early modern painting is an elusive one, not least because the Western regard for

primitive cultures is informed by conflicting desire and apprehension. In Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon* of 1907 (FIG. 7.101), attraction and repulsion of this kind coexist in a single, deeply complex work. Here, as William Rubin has suggested, the artist borrowed two narratives: an Edenic fantasy of Polynesian *luxe-barbare*, represented by the two nudes in the center of the picture, and a darker one of savagery, mystery, and fear, which is putatively incarnated by the *demoiselles* on the far right and left, whose features resemble various kinds of Oceanic and African masks.¹⁰⁸ Picasso found his sources no farther away than Paris's Musée d'Ethnographie at the Palais du Trocadéro. It was there, in the dank, neglected galleries of African and Oceanic art, that he later claimed to have been struck by the objects' "exorcistic" charge, a revelation that provoked the artist to repaint portions of the *Demoiselles* (which had been originally conceived in the Iberian mode), infusing the painting with an aggressive formal energy partly adapted from the devices of *l'art nègre*.

The picture was originally set in a brothel, and its confrontational sexuality reflects the explicitly gendered and erotic nature of the primitivist impulse throughout the period. In this context, Picasso's superstitious projection of desire and fear could well pertain to the reciprocity of sex and disease; syphilis was a scourge at the turn of the century, often disfiguring and fatal. Savage and darkly absurd, the *Demoiselles* is the Grand Guignol descendant of an illustrious harem line including pictures such as Ingres's *Small Bather* and Delacroix's *Algerian Women in Their Apartment* (see FIGS. 5.162 and 5.161). Standing and squatting within a pictorial space composed on shifting and eliding shards, Picasso's women are both entrapped and empowered.

In form and content, the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* is a restless and aggressive work—a picture, as many have observed since 1907, that stares back. The development of the painting took several months, and the results appear to have astonished even Picasso himself, as well as his circle of friends (some of whom casually suggested that he had lost his mind). Very few people saw it until 1916, when it was publicly exhibited for the first time.

Primitivism in Matisse and Picasso would soon give way to other concerns: the emergence of Cubism, in Picasso's case, and for Matisse, a synthesis of construction and decoration. Between 1908 and 1910

7.101 (opposite)

Pablo Picasso

(1881–1973)

Les Demoiselles d'Avignon, 1907

Oil on canvas, 96 x 92 in.
(243.9 x 233.7 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York; acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss bequest





7.102
 Henri Matisse
 (1869–1954)
Game of Bowls, 1908
 Oil on canvas,
 44 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 57 in.
 (113.5 x 145 cm)
 The State Hermitage
 Museum, St. Petersburg

Matisse developed a broad, flat, quasi-monumental style devoted to nude figures in pastoral settings. Some are vaguely allegorical, with themes such as music and dance, while others, including *The Game of Bowls* (FIG. 7.102), are more specifically anecdotal. In form and color, these pictures are highly simplified; the artist also created increasingly complex still lifes and interiors during this period, but the figural scenes brought unprecedented scale and breadth to his work. In *The Game of Bowls*, the expressive implications of this formal

quality pertain to a specific theme, one that might be called the “pastoralization” of Paris. Since Haussmann and Adolphe Alphand, whose renovation of the city was distinguished by a new emphasis on providing park space, the modern park had commonly been sentimentalized as a popular adaptation of the aristocratic garden, a domesticated arcadia where different social classes were now free to mingle in bucolic leisure.¹⁰⁹ The truth was somewhat less idyllic, but this myth of the Parisian park was perpetuated by the Impressionists and the



7.103

Henri Matisse,
1869-1954

The Back (I), 1909

Bronze, 6 ft. 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. x
44 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(188.9 x 113 x 16.5 cm)

The Museum of
Modern Art,
New York; Mrs. Simon
Guggenheim Fund





Nabis (although representations of nursemaids and their charges by Bonnard and Vuillard signal the subtle persistence of old hierarchies). Even though Matisse's *Game of Bowls* is set in a timeless landscape, the game itself is recognizable as modern boules, a highly ritualized and contemplative pastime that is pursued every Sunday in parks throughout the city (and France). Remarkable for its dynamic poise, the painting might be described as an archaic ode to the lawns of Paris.

Henri Rousseau's *Dream* (FIG. 7.104) has a surprising affinity with Matisse's pastoral idyll. Rousseau's largest and most accomplished jungle picture, *The Dream* should be interpreted less as a Gauguinesque flight to tropical paradise than as a retreat into the recesses of the city. Although it was once mistakenly believed that Rousseau had served with the French army in Veracruz, his jungle subjects were drawn not from world travel but from picture books and, above all, from visits to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris. In fact, Rousseau's style, which is distinguished by simplified form and an almost abstract emphasis on design, evokes a stillness that recalls the artifice of the Jardin, with its transplanted specimens and simulated settings. In *The Dream*, which Rousseau exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants in 1910, a nude bourgeoisie reclines on a Louis-Philippe sofa, from the comfort of which she is presumed to have dreamed herself into this jungle. Where Picasso's primitivism is exotic or savage, Rousseau's is Edenic. But both discovered the primitive without traveling any farther than the museums—the Trocadéro and the Jardin—of modern Paris.

7.104

Henri Rousseau (1844–1910)

The Dream, 1910

Oil on canvas, 80½ x 117½ in. (204.5 x 298.5 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York;

gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller

MODERNISM AND THE MARKETPLACE

In 1908 Matisse attempted to consolidate and codify his aesthetic investigations by writing and teaching. In addition to publishing a long essay, "Notes of a Painter" (in which *The Game of Bowls* appeared as an illustration), the artist opened a school that he ran out of his studio at the Couvent des Oiseaux. Attended mostly by foreigners—Scandinavians, Germans, Russians, and Americans (including Max Weber and Patrick Henry Bruce)—it offered conventional art-school exercises shaped by Matisse's own developing analysis of form. Matisse was the sole instructor. Over the course of several years he hosted roughly eighty students, and the popularity of his classes reflected his growing reputation among younger artists. During the prewar years Matisse moved his home and studio several times, as commercial success afforded him increasing financial security. Following the Couvent des Oiseaux, Matisse and his family briefly rented a residence and studio space in the Hôtel Biron (where Rodin was also living), on the boulevard des Invalides. In 1909 he moved to Issy-les-Moulineaux,

a suburb of Paris, where he built a new studio.

By this time Matisse had enjoyed a succession of increasingly generous patrons. Among them were educated Americans of modestly independent means and wealthy Russian industrialist-entrepreneurs: the Steins, including Gertrude, Leo, and Michael (with his wife, Sarah, who attended Matisse's classes), and their acquaintances from Baltimore, the sisters Claribel and Etta Cone, all of whom settled in Paris for a time; and Ivan Morosov and Sergei Shchukin, who lived in Moscow. Moreover, in 1909 Matisse left the Galerie Druet, with whom he had had two large one-man shows, and signed a contract with the prestigious Paris dealer Bernheim-Jeune. The Steins had been buying works by Cézanne from Vollard before acquiring Matisse's *Woman with a Hat*, the magisterial *Le Bonheur de vivre*, and *Blue Nude*. (Ultimately, it was Michael and Sarah who would continue to favor Matisse, after Gertrude and Leo began to lose interest in the new direction of his work). Shchukin not only purchased



7.105

Gertrude Stein's
apartment, 27 rue de
Fleurus, after 1905

dozens of Matisse's paintings (in addition to works by Picasso) but also commissioned him to create a pair of remarkable, mural-size canvases for his Moscow house—bold, flat allegories of music and dance in the style of *The Game of Bowls*, a manner that challenged and superseded the decorative legacy of Puvis.

This sort of support for young art was rare. During the 1890s and the prewar period, the Impressionists and Post-Impressionists were canonized as modern masters at the galleries of Durand-Ruel, Bernheim-Jeune, Vollard, and Georges Petit, where the dissidents of the previous generation were marketed as the standard-bearers of French tradition. As a result, a wealthy market was established for the works of Manet, Renoir, and Cézanne, and their prices began to soar. At the same time, significant patronage for the new modernists in Paris came less from Parisian dealers and *haut bourgeois* collectors than from foreigners. Picasso's most advanced work—as admired as Matisse's by the Russians and Americans, as well as by collectors from Switzerland and Prague—was represented in the market by two German art dealers, Wilhelm Uhde and Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, who had moved to Paris around this time. It was this foreign, and especially German, support of modern painting that partly encouraged conservative French critics to slander it as an invasion of bad taste from abroad. These foreign collectors and dealers were also responsible for disseminating the art of Paris to avant-garde communities outside France; Shchukin's Troubetskoy Palace was open to the public every Sunday, giving painters such as Kasimir Malevich and Vladimir Tatlin the opportunity to study Picasso and Matisse in depth, an opportunity that transformed the history of twentieth-century art.

In their apartment at 27 rue de Fleurus, near the Luxembourg gardens, Gertrude and Leo Stein amassed a large collection of works by Matisse and Picasso from the entire prewar period, and their rooms became a bourgeois-bohemian salon (FIG. 7.105). With her heavy, shapeless clothing and masculine bearing, Gertrude embodied an eccentricity that sometimes characterized the avant-garde milieu during this period, when acquiring art could be an affirmation of both social and cultural nonconformism. Indeed, being an American Jewish homosexual, as well as a writer of modernist prose, Gertrude virtually epitomized the

syndrome. For the most part, collecting modern art in Paris during the prewar period was an amateur's affair conducted by people of largely moderate means. Some collectors, referred to as *dénicheurs* (dislodgers), prowled small galleries throughout the city in search of new work that had not yet attained a fashionable price. (Artists themselves collected this way: in 1908 Picasso purchased a large and important painting by Rousseau for five francs from a Montmartre secondhand shop, where it was being sold as a reusable canvas.) Though financial speculation was only rarely the primary agenda of the *dénicheur*, collectors were certainly influenced by the economic fortunes of Impressionists and Post-Impressionists, whose new status as modern masters was confirmed by the Salon retrospectives of Toulouse-Lautrec, Gauguin, Cézanne, Seurat, and van Gogh between 1900 and 1907.

Of course, prices for Matisse and Picasso did steadily rise, and their work's appeal was enhanced by its identification with "progressive" art of the previous generation. Both artists eventually attracted dealers willing to purchase their entire output. Commercial support of this kind likely encouraged them to respond to collectors' desires or values in their work (notwithstanding the mythology of avant-gardism as solely a radical, independent pursuit), although this willingness is difficult to measure during the prewar period, except in the obvious case of a commission.¹¹⁰ (Avant-gardists were not supported extensively by a socially prominent clientele until after World War I, by which time their work was tempered by neotraditionalist elements of style.¹¹¹) But patronage also increased Matisse's and Picasso's readiness to take aesthetic risks and somewhat buffered them from the competitive world of the Salons, where Picasso never exhibited at all.

Other members of the self-styled avant-garde did have to struggle for recognition at the Salon among hordes of pseudo-Impressionists, would-be society portraitists, and Sunday painters (especially at the Indépendants, a juryless Salon open to any artist who wished to exhibit). The nature of the market for new art in Paris partly reflects the values of consumer culture at large. The vast Salon d'Automne and Salon des Indépendants were routinely compared by critics to the *grand magasin de nouveautés*, or large department store, which since the mid-nineteenth century had all but crushed smaller

merchants and specialized shops, emerging as the dominant commercial institution of its day. In particular, critics used the word *nouveauté*, or “novelty” (which, in the language of retailing, specifically refers to dry goods) to characterize the proliferation of new schools of art as little more than a phenomenon of modern advertising, a promotional strategy designed to exploit the consumer appetite for a new product line. This, of course, is as much a syndrome of fashion as retailing, and inexorably links the modern history of style to the modern socio-cultural spectacle of “progress” and relentless change.

Both the visual style and the functional needs of modern merchandising were, in turn, closely associated with the recent technology of building with iron and glass. Beginning with the Bon Marché, which was built by L. A. Boileau and Gustave Eiffel between 1869 and 1887 (and further expanded in 1912), new department store design concentrated on the practical and aesthetic qualities of the glass palace—a large, light-filled space that could be organized into a system of interdependent subdivisions yet provide an effective setting for theatrical display. The expansive new space could easily accommodate the diversification of modern retailing—the ever-increasing availability in one place of furniture, kitchen and bath fixtures, hardware, toys, art supplies

and musical instruments, sporting goods, cosmetics, stationery, and clothing (appropriately prefabricated, or “ready-to-wear”). Department stores came to rely heavily on technology, using elevators, telephone lines, chutes, and conveyor belts to facilitate the flow of goods throughout the store. And just as the department store substituted standardization and rationalization for the old guild system of specialized production and trade, so too was iron and glass sometimes said to signal the triumph of efficiency over historical style. Quantity, availability, and size—the fundamental properties of mass retail—were defended with the same rhetoric praising democratization that was used to promote the new architecture as the product of an antielitist age.

Iron-and-glass construction could be a vehicle for architectural enchantment as well as for functionalism, a dualism that also was ideally suited to the department store. Much like the world’s fairs, the department store became a self-contained fairground of its own, thematically decorated at holiday times, packed with imported exotica, advertised as a tourist attraction, and run with the incessant bustle of a public festival. The new interior served to enhance the spectacle. Appropriately, Le Printemps was transformed in 1906 by the architect René Binet, who had created the fantastical Porte Binet at the Exposition Universelle of 1900. To the original store by Paul Sédille, which had been constructed between 1881 and 1885, Binet added a sweeping central iron staircase ornamented with flowing botanical forms. Binet’s interior for a new Printemps store on the boulevard Haussmann (FIG. 7.107) was a curvilinear extravaganza of balconies and rotundas centered on a great octagonal hall. Structural and decorative elements, including cages containing electric elevators, were fabricated as a teeming network of iron tendrils. Binet’s innovation was to support the blue-and-green glass cupola on pillars extended above the top floor, so that all six levels, which were open to the central hall, would be illuminated by natural light (individual displays were lit with fixtures by Lalique). Gilded stucco and other simulated decorative materials coat the space with dazzling ersatz luxury, subordinating the language of the engineer.

In contrast to the interior, Binet’s façade for Le Printemps was composed of ornamented masonry, making no significant departure from the department

7.106

Frantz Jourdain
(1847–1935)

Façade, Samaritaine
Department Store,
rue de la Monnaie,
1905



stores of the Second Empire. Modernism first surfaced on a department store exterior at La Samaritaine, for which a new building ("Magasin 2") was created in 1905–10 by Frantz Jourdain, president of the Société du Nouveau Paris. Jourdain's façade was completely given over to exposed metal and glass (FIG. 7.106), "rationally" articulated by steel piers that divide the surface into a severe structural grid of geometric bays. This frame was richly decorated in the fin de siècle craft tradition, with colored tiles, foliated wrought iron, hammered copper, and carved wood, while the domed corner rotundas (illuminated at night from the inside) were actually a generic holdover from the department stores of the 1870s. In retrospect, it might be said that Jourdain's evangelical devotion to such Art Nouveau ornament prevented the exterior from fulfilling its destiny as a rigorous commercial application of engineering style. Upon its completion, La Samaritaine was praised and attacked for both its radical severity and its frivolous decor—whether for or against Jourdain's work, critics recognized a tension between old and new modernism. Jourdain pointed out, however, that the building was, after all, a department store; metal and glass might evoke progressive, democratic associations but its primary function was to tempt the passerby. Jourdain (not unlike Gustave Kahn) compared this role to a pretty dress that a woman would wear to attract attention in the course of a promenade.¹¹²

Women, of course, were the primary consumers at the department stores. Zola turned to Jourdain when he was writing his novel *Au Bonheur des Dames* (1883; Ladies' paradise), which features a fictitious department store based on Jourdain's elaborate notes.¹¹³ At a time when "le bonheur de vivre" was being equated with arcadian sexual abandon, "le bonheur des dames" came down to shopping. Of course, the social dynamic of the department store implicated not only gender but also class. As Michael Miller has discussed, the consumer culture created by department stores, starting with the Bon Marché, translated upper-class values into purchasable goods for the middle class—symbols of a prosperous household and a decorous way of life.¹¹⁴ It is probably impossible now to recapture the astonishing novelty represented by such dramatic interiors of consumption and display, but their impact is suggested by the frequency with which modern department stores



were compared to cathedrals and museums.

The conspicuous consumption by the upper class was premised on a kinship with the aristocracy, signified by the luxury crafts of the Rococo era. Indeed, Ernest Cognacq and Louise Jay, the husband and wife who founded La Samaritaine, were important collectors of eighteenth-century art, making the metaphor of the department store as museum doubly—and somewhat ironically—apt.¹¹⁵ Intimations of high taste during this period were de rigueur among descendants of the ancien régime as well as among monied pretenders. Count Moïse de Camondo, for example, belonged to a family of financiers that had been established in France since the middle of the nineteenth century. Seeking a place in French tradition, Camondo collected eighteenth-century antiquities and built a shrine to that golden age of French design, the Hôtel de Camondo (FIG. 7.108). The classical exterior, conceived by the architect René Sergent and constructed between 1911 and 1914, is a pastiche of elements from the Petit Trianon as well as other buildings by Ange-Jacques Gabriel on the place Louis xv. Inside, the various rooms simulate authentic settings for Camondo's collection, which included a series of paintings by Jean-Baptiste Huet that were installed to look as if they had been made to order. Situated on the edge of the Parc Monceau, Camondo's building occupies the site of his father's Second Empire *hôtel*, which he destroyed—an act of filial impiety that allowed him to reinvent his own cultural identity.¹¹⁶ Camondo was, in fact, a genuine connoisseur, serving as vice president of both the Société des Amis du Louvre and the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs.

7.107

René Binet (1866–1911)
Staircase of the Grands
Magasins du Printemps,
1911

MODERN CLASSICISM

In addition to its symbolic resonance, classicism would turn out to be visually well suited to a more abstract, hybrid strain of tempered modernism that flourished in architecture and design during the prewar period, emerging as an alternative to the perceived excesses of the avant-garde. In the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Gustave and Auguste Perret demonstrated this affinity of the classical and the modern with a façade that is rationalist yet subtly historicizing. The theater was conceived in 1907 by Gabriel Astruc, an impresario and boulevardier who was director of the Société Musicale. Astruc's new "Palais Philharmonique" was intended to facilitate the modern production of symphonies, operas, and ballets, for which only a few theaters in Paris were adequately equipped. As such, it would complement the Opéra and the Opéra Comique, aging official institutions that were largely closed to innovative programming. Astruc's father, who counted Camondo and Henri de Rothschild among his friends, was a rabbi

who moved in elite Jewish circles, and the support of this community enabled Gabriel to raise the funds for his project. After struggling with municipal authorities over the site, he finally built his theater in 1913, at 13–15 avenue Montaigne.¹¹⁷

Astruc and Gabriel Thomas, his administrator, had gone through four architects, including Henry van de Velde, before turning to the Perrets, who vastly pared down the interior and exterior design. Stylistically, they showed that classicism and functionalism actually resemble one another, linked by their shared economy of means. Large diagrammatic framing elements on the marble façade express the lucid structure of the building, which was composed of concrete (like the rue Franklin apartment house; see FIG. 7.65). Various historical details, such as Ionic pilasters, complement the classicizing tripartite composition, but the structure's stark planarity thoroughly distances it from classical pastiche.

Incorporating painting and sculpture, the Théâtre



1108

Rene Sergent
(1836–1927)

Façade on the Parc
Monceau, Hôtel Nissim
de Camondo, 1914



7.109
Gustave Perret (b. 1876)
and Auguste Perret
(1874-1954)
Théâtre des Champs-
Élysées, 1912

7.110
Antoine Bourdelle
(1861–1929)
Apollo Frieze, Théâtre
des Champs-Élysées,
1912

7.111
Maurice Denis
(1870–1943)
*Cupola of the Théâtre
des Champs-Élysées*, 1911
Distemper on reinforced
plaster, colored and
frosted glass, diameter:
94 1/2 in. (240 cm)

des Champs-Élysées was an integrated exercise in the modernist classical mode. Thomas deliberately avoided the mannerisms of the neo-Rococo. Sculpture was commissioned from Antoine Bourdelle, a former student of Rodin's who had become a leading proponent of the new classicism. Working in close collaboration with the architects, Bourdelle created façade decorations in low relief—friezes and panels devoted to Apollo and Pan, with classical muses signifying various performing arts (FIG. 7.110). He derived the fluidly dynamic gestures of his figures from watching Isadora Duncan, the American dancer whose unorthodox style was said to evoke the dances of ancient Greece. Bourdelle's manner was highly distilled, an adaptation more of archaic Greek proportions and lines than of the later refinements of fifth-century style. Bold and compact, his reliefs

were designed to sustain the surface tension of the wall, without separating themselves (through deep projections or illusionistic space) from the flattened composition of the façade. For murals, Thomas turned to the Nabi artists Denis, Roussel, and Vuillard, who by then were established modernist painter-decorators. Heightened by clear coloration and refined contours, Denis's lyrical classicism echoed that of Puvis. For the Grande Salle, he created a four-panel composition around the base of the cupola (FIG. 7.111)—open-air allegories of dance, opera, the symphony, and the lyric drama. In a related pastoral mode, Roussel's stage curtain depicts a bacchic procession.

Vuillard had already had extensive experience working for the theater, producing graphics and set designs for Paul Fort and Aurélien Lugné-Poë (as well as having









adapted to mural decoration the flat, glue-based medium used for scene painting). For the lobby of the Salle de la Comédie, he painted ten wall panels, the largest of which were devoted to the themes of classical and modern comedy, each represented by a specific play: Molière's *Le Malade imaginaire* and *Le Petit Café* by Tristan Bernard (FIG. 7.112), which premiered in 1912. Based on recent productions (at the Odéon and the Théâtre du Palais Royal) that he attended repeatedly in preparation for the commission, Vuillard's panels have an aspect of actuality unlike the various classicisms that prevail elsewhere at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, although his work retains a decorous relationship to the wall.

The modern artist may be typecast as an avant-garde bohemian inciting insubordination and unruly change, but modernism in theater and design plays a different role, one rooted in the history of high taste. At the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, Astruc brought dramatic new developments in painting, theater, music, and dance to an audience of aristocratic, political, and entrepreneurial upper classes, whose influence and support perpetuated Paris's theatrical season. In turn, Astruc's audience transformed the parade of new productions into a kind of glittering costume party and recapitulated its many stylistic mannerisms in their own apparel and interior design.

Beginning in 1909, the Champs-Élysées hosted the annual appearance of Sergey Diaghilev's sensational Ballets Russes. Most of the productions were extravagantly exotic, largely owing to the genius of Léon Bakst, whose dazzling sets and costumes for ballets based on classical as well as Russian and loosely "oriental" themes—such as *Narcisse*, *Cléopâtre*, and *Schéhérazade*—were a sensation in Paris. Bakst brought an Art Nouveau concern for unified design to his deliberately exotic taste for lavish pattern and radiant color. An exorbitant inventiveness kept the work from lapsing into sumptuous sameness (at least during the great years, before World War I). Bakst's superb drawings reflect his range; sketches for *The Firebird* (FIG. 7.113) and *Le Dieu bleu* (FIG. 7.114) show his opulent sensibility functioning in alternative—folkish and exotic—modes.

The Ballets Russes enjoyed a faddish popularity in high fashion and design. Boudoirs, in particular, were remade according to the theatrical fantasy of a Persian

7.112

Edouard Vuillard
(1868–1940)

Le Petit Café, decorative
panel for the Théâtre des
Champs-Élysées, 1912–13

Distemper on canvas,
70 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 110 $\frac{1}{4}$ in.
(180 x 280 cm)
Théâtre des Champs-
Élysées



7.113 (above)
Léon Bakst (1866–1924)
Costume for the Princess
in Igor Stravinsky's
The Firebird, 1913
Watercolor, gouache, silver
and gold paint, 26 $\frac{3}{8}$ x
19 $\frac{3}{8}$ in. (67.4 x 49 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; The
Joan and Lester Avnet
Collection



7.114 (above, right)
Léon Bakst (1866–1924)
Costume for the Temple
Dancer in *Le Dieu Bleu*
(*The Blue God*), 1912
Pencil, gold, and
watercolor, 16 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 11 in.
(42.7 x 27.9 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre Georges
Pompidou

interior, filled with embroidered tapestries, patterned curtains, and great piles of cushions, a luxurious overlay of texture and color (FIG. 7.115). The couturier Paul Poiret, in particular, designed clothing to suit the trend, featuring turbans and harem pants as well as a bedroom for the decorative arts section of the Salon d'Automne in 1913. For several years, the new vogue for Arabian themes dominated the high-society ball. Poiret hosted the most celebrated of these, the "Thousand and Second Night" (FIG. 7.116); for the Marchesa Casati's ball, Bakst himself designed the hostess's costume.¹¹⁸

If the Ballets Russes brought exoticism to the French interior, two productions featuring the great dancer Vaslav Nijinsky reflect the alternative tendency—the affinity of modernism for classicism that had shaped the design of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées itself: *L'Après-midi d'un faune* (FIG. 7.117), a languorous fantasy of hypnotic desire drawn from Mallarmé's paean to the erotic subconscious of classical Greek myth, for which Nijinsky imitated the schematic gestures of antique vase painting; and *Jeux*, depicting a crepuscular tennis match in which spare white costumes by Jeanne

Paquin and geometrized choreography transform contemporary manners into the ritual of a modern "court." Both based on music by Claude Debussy, the ballets are linked by an essential purity that means to transcend any one historical style.

Classicism prevailed in high design of the prewar period. As Nancy Troy has demonstrated, developments in the French decorative arts following Art Nouveau were partly driven by perceived advances in Germany, where new design was supported by a systematic approach to education and production, with the close support of the manufacturing industry. Frantz Jourdain invited the Germans to exhibit at the Salon d'Automne in 1910, and the results provoked a reevaluation of the state of French design—particularly the failure of Art Nouveau to achieve anything more than an elitist emphasis on luxury handicraft, which proved completely unsuited to mass production. Various tendencies emerged from this climate of disaffection, including a repudiation of Rococo organicism for the purity of the classical line, with special reference to the Empire period (FIG. 7.121). The relatively simple style would



7.115
 Alexandre Benois
 (1870-1960)
 Set design for the
 Emperor's Bedroom in
 Igor Stravinsky's
*Le Rossignol (The
 Nightingale)*, 1914
 Gouache
 Ashmolean Museum,
 Oxford



7.116
 Georges Lepape
 (1887-1971)
A Persian Fête at Poiré's,
 fashion plate from
Femina, Christmas 1912
 Album Lepape,
 Bibliothèque Nationale
 de France, Cabinet
 des Estampes



7.117

Nijinsky in Debussy's
*L'Après-midi d'un
faune (Afternoon of
a Faun)*, 1912

Victoria and Albert
Museum, London



not only be easier to manufacture but also recalled the strengths of the guild and apprentice system in eighteenth-century France, which had declined during the following century. Finally, like other revivalist modes of the epoch, it was understood to be peculiarly—nationalistically—French.

The new style of light classicism, as practiced by a loose community of designers known as the *coloristes*, was also characterized by a vivid palette and an eclectic approach to the interior. These designers—including André Groult, Paul Iribe, André Mare, Poiret, Louis Süe, and others—directed their own houses of fashion

and design: Paul Iribe et Cie, Poiret's Maison Martine, Süe's Atelier Français. Poiret had worked under the couturier Jacques Doucet, who was an important collector of ancien régime artifacts—art, furniture, and clothing from the periods of Louis xv and Louis xvi, which were displayed at his house on the rue Spontini. Doucet was a founding member of the Société de l'Histoire de Costume; many of his fashion designs were luxurious adaptations of mid-eighteenth-century gowns (FIG. 7.119).¹¹⁹ It is instructive to compare Doucet's design to the linear clarity of Poiret (FIG. 7.120), which was as much a corrective to the stylistic indulgence of

7.118

Leonetto Cappiello
(1875–1942)

*Mounet-Sully in the Role
of Oedipus Rex*, 1899

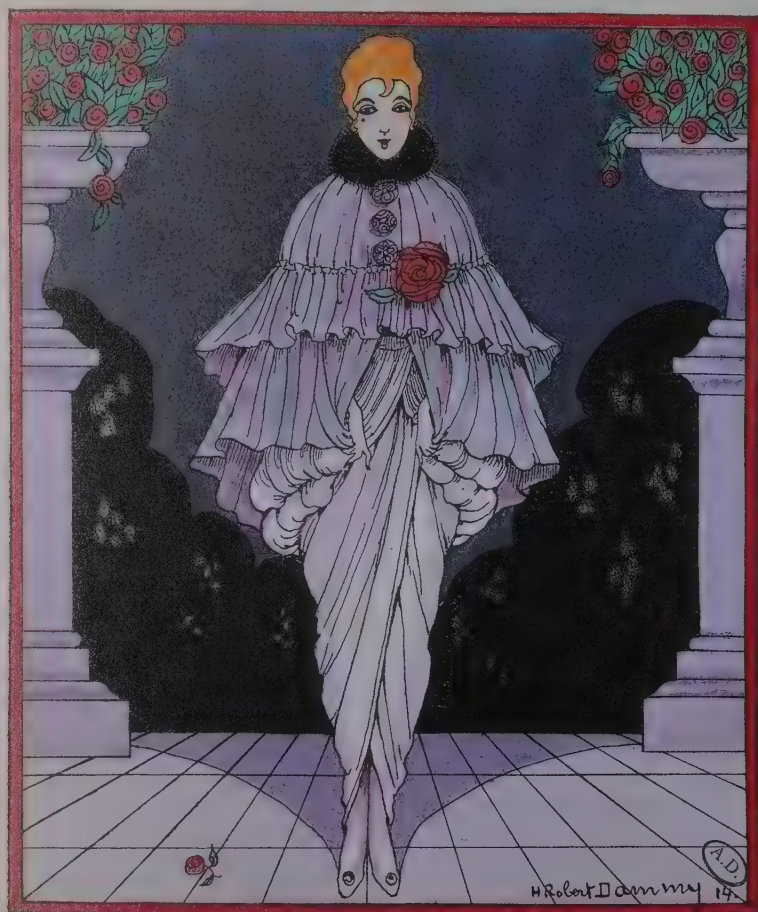
Charcoal, pastel and
gouache on paper, 22 x
18 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (56.5 x 47.1 cm)
Musée d'Orsay

7.120 (right)
Paul Poiret (1879–1944)
Strozzi dress, from *Art et
Décoration*, April 1911

7.119 (below)
H. Robert Dammy
Her Name Was Manon, evening
cape design by Jacques Doucet,
plate from the *Gazette du
Bon Ton*, 1914
Hand-colored *pochair* print, 9 1/8 x
7 1/8 in. (23.2 x 18.1 cm)
Bibliothèque des Arts Décoratifs

Doucet's generation as the classicism of 1800 had been understood to be in its own post-Rococo context.

Coloriste interior design and fashion were so closely associated with theatrical sets and costumes that the ethic of craft reform seems to be beside the point; Poiret's party apparel and Iribe's costume designs and illustrations for boulevard theater (FIG. 7.122) rarely departed from the realm of high-society entertainment. Ultimately, then, luxury goods—and the atelier of the individual artist—remained the domain of advance in French design. Indeed, when Doucet sold the contents of his rue Spontini house in 1912, abandoning his attachment to the Rococo, he turned to modern classicists such as Iribe to create furnishings for his new apartment on the avenue du Bois, in which Antoine



ELLE S'APPELLE MANON...

Cape du soir de Doucet



Watteau, François Boucher, and Jean-Honoré Fragonard were replaced by Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, and Georges Braque.

The modernity of the classical line is a function of its reductivism, a quality that had been a goal in the search for an essential or primary visual language at least since Seurat and Gauguin. It is significant, in this respect, that Poiret purchased a bronze version of Brancusi's *Maiistra* in 1912 (the exoticism of the subject would have given it added appeal). Neoclassical furniture and fashion share the purity of the simplified silhouette not only with related developments in classicism (in architecture, for example) but also with less



exclusive examples from commercial art. Before he began working with Poiret, Iribe had been a superb humorist illustrator, who applied his immaculate line to caricatures and advertisements with rare pictorial economy and wit, revealing him to be a kind of chic Vallotton.¹²⁰ Recognizing the affinity between Iribe's graphic style and the classicizing simplicity of the new couture, Poiret employed him in 1908 to produce an illustrated album of Poiret's designs, a publication that transformed fashion illustration of the epoch.

Similarly, the graphic arts were undergoing a general transformation, which found the neo-Rococo gaiety of Chéret's style (see FIG. 7.36) being replaced

by a bold and succinct manner. In addition to Toulouse-Lautrec and the Nabis, artists such as Leonetto Cappiello, who were largely devoted to poster making alone, originated a compact, legible visual vernacular (still featuring the representation of women, as in Chéret) that was said to be well suited to the age of high-speed transportation and the rapid glance. Ironically, while Poiret's loose-fitting Empire gowns attempted to do away with the corset, Cappiello's poster for the Corset Le Furet (FIG. 7.123) made the (painfully) streamlined female silhouette itself an achievement in modern commercial and pictorial design.

7.121

Louis Süe (1875–1968)

A French Studio, presented for the Salon d'Automne of 1913, as reproduced in *Art et Décoration*, January 1914

ANNÉE. — N° 11

PRIX: 50 cent.

1^{er} Mars 1911.

Comœdia Illustré



7.122 (above)

Paul Iribe (1883–1935)

Mademoiselle Jeanne Dirys in the Role of Irma du Caudet, from Cadret de Coutras by Abel Hermant at the Théâtre du Vaudeville, cover illustration for Comœdia Illustré, March 1, 1911

7.123 (opposite)

Leonetto Cappiello (1875–1942)

Poster for “Corset Le Furet,” 1901

Lithograph, 55⁷/₁₆ x 39¹/₄ in. (138.5 x 98 cm)

Musée de la Publicité

Marnie



CORSET

LE FURET

BREVETE S.G.D.G.

maintient mais ne comprime pas

THE CAMERA

A photograph of corsets in a shop window (FIG. 7.124) is as close as Eugène Atget ever came before the war to producing an image of boulevard commercial culture, having otherwise studiously avoided the monuments and fashions of modern Paris. In most related images from the prewar period, he focused on lowly or historical forms of the commercial

street—sidewalk vendors, the scrappy displays of merchants in poorer neighborhoods, and the signboard, an artifact of old Paris. The corset, of course, was far from a modern design object, but window dressing of this kind, featuring meticulous rows of nearly identical objects, was decidedly new; during the 1920s it would transform the appearance of the boulevard and



7.124

Eugène Atget
(1856–1927)

Corsets/379, c. 1912

Gelatin silver
printing-out-paper
from dry-plate negative,
9 x 7 1/16 in.

(22.9 x 18 cm)

The Art Institute of
Chicago; Julien Levy
Collection, gift
of Julien Levy



be promoted as a high aesthetic achievement by modernist architects and painters of the Purist school. The anonymous personae suggested by the corsets also demonstrate what Giorgio de Chirico, and later the Surrealists, would find so enthralling about shop windows. Atget's corset shop strikes an unsteady sociocultural balance between persistence and change.

Following the introduction of a cheap handheld camera by the American Kodak company in 1888, its portability and rapid shutter speed made photography increasingly accessible to nonprofessionals on a vast international scale. The implications of amateurism were broad, above all with respect to the expanded audience for photography, in which producer and consumer were now one and the same. As Henri Rivière's views of the Eiffel Tower (see FIG. 7.4) show, the snapshot also facilitated a new graphic manner, one characterized by informal immediacy. In at least one case, that of Jacques-Henri Lartigue, the potential of this genre was

fulfilled through the vision of a child (the primitive or not-yet-conventional vision that modernists already prized). Born to a prosperous family outside Paris, Lartigue received his first handheld camera at seven years of age, and he soon began to produce photographs largely devoted to dynamic subjects—running, jumping, and ball-throwing family members, speeding cars, drifting biplanes. Often boldly cropped and blurred, these images anticipate the compositional devices of avant-garde photography between the wars, even as they exude the playful and unself-conscious air of a weekend pastime. As a young adolescent visiting Paris, Lartigue turned his camera to extravagantly fashionable women strolling in the Bois de Boulogne (FIG. 7.125), creating the photographic approximation of a hasty glimpse.

At the same time that amateur photography was facilitating innovation, the demands of Symbolism were provoking a fundamental challenge to the photographic

7.125

Jacques Henri Lartigue
(1894–1986)

*Avenue du Bois de
Boulogne, January 15,
1911*

Association des Amis de
Jacques Henri Lartigue,
Paris

7.126

Robert Demachy
(1859–1936)

*Le Grand Palais:
A Memory of the 1900
Exhibition, 1900*

Gum bichromate print,
9 1/8 x 4 5/8 in.

(22.8 x 11.5 cm)

Société Française de
Photographie



medium itself. Until the 1890s, photography had been exploited as a mechanical form of accurate recording, a largely technical accomplishment; it would, of course, continue to flourish in that capacity, especially in the fields of science and technology. In contrast, Pictorialist photography reflects the impact on photography of the Symbolist dream image.¹²¹ In this case, the rise of the snapshot seems to have stimulated the emergence of its opposite—highly aestheticized images in which mechanical qualities of clarity and detail were suppressed by new techniques that express the pervasive presence of an authorial hand. These effects included evocative blurring achieved with filters and dim lighting as well as by atmospheric conditions—fog and smoke were common, as in Robert Demächy's image of the Grand Palais in 1900, seen across the pont Alexandre III (FIG. 7.126), which is permeated with the sooty black smoke of a passing boat on the Seine. Equally important was the manipulation of the printing process itself: the gum bichromate medium allowed the amount of pigment to be controlled by hand, and the surface of the photograph could be brushed and scratched. The result was a unique handmade image that defied the photograph's inherent nature as an exactly replicable object, allowing instead for a close approximation of subjective vision (FIG. 7.127). The Pictorialist photograph was also understood to be an expressive device. Writing in the *Revue des deux mondes* in 1897, the critic Robert de la Sizeranne explained that the "mania for inventory" had been replaced by a new sensibility, according to which the photograph would be conceived as an "inverted image of the soul."¹²²

The Pictorialist tendency was an international one, promoted in part by a wealthy community of amateurs who gave Pictorialism an elitist air. This, in turn, appealed to the kind of upscale market that photography had not previously reached. In Paris, as well as Vienna, New York, and other major cities, Pictorialists formed exhibition groups and promoted photography as a high art; the Photo Club de Paris held its first Salon in 1894 at the Durand-Ruel gallery, which was more closely associated with the luxury market for Impressionist painting. Subjects were taken largely from the studio and the landscape—nudes and interiors that recall the motifs of Salon painting. Pictorialist street scenes, however, are more compelling, primarily because the urgency of the

city stands up to the denaturing effect of the Pictorialist's soft-focus gaze. In his views of the Paris boulevard, Pierre Dubreuil further offset the delicacy of the idiom by cropping his composition (FIG. 7.128). Painters also took up the camera at this time. Vuillard and Bonnard joined the amateur handheld fad, taking snapshots of their houses outside Paris; Degas, now an elder statesman, used older photographic techniques to produce hermetic, quasi-Symbolist interiors bathed in darkness (FIG. 7.129).

Pictorialists sought to establish photography as an art form, as opposed to an instrument of record or reportage. But new contributions to the archival application of the camera during the Belle Époque show

7.127
Emile Joachim Constant
Puyo (1857–1933)
Montmartre, c. 1900–1905
Gum bichromate print,
7 7/8 x 6 1/6 in.
(19.6 x 15.4 cm)
The Bokelberg Collection,
Paris



7.128

Pierre Dubreuil
(1872–1944)

The Boulevards, 1909

Bromoil print,
9¼ x 7¼ in.
(23.5 x 19.7 cm)

The Metropolitan
Museum of Art; Ford
Motor Company
Collection

that the mechanistic vision in photography could be, in its way, as much an artifice as the Pictorialist one. Beginning in 1910, the wealthy financier Albert Kahn established the Archives de la Planète, which he devoted to assembling a photographic and cinematic record of the entire world. Over the next twenty years a team of technicians produced some 72,000 images—5,897 of Paris alone (FIG. 7.130). These were developed as autochromes, a new type of color photograph (best viewed by being projected on a screen rather than printed on paper) that had recently been introduced by the Lumière brothers.¹²³ Unlike Atget's images, which depict fragments of a physical and cultural whole, those taken

for Kahn's enterprise were not governed by any strict system. Instead, the Kahn archive was the obsessive fulfillment of an appetite for replication and inventory, an urge that had been stimulated by the camera itself.

Alphonse Bertillon, who published the book *La Photographie judiciaire* in 1890, refined the use of photography as a tool for criminal identification and police investigations of accident and crime.¹²⁴ As chief of criminal identification for the Paris police, Bertillon established a rigorous system of classification that enabled authorities to manage a vast inventory of criminal portrait images. Having standardized the production of such photographs, he also codified the procedure



for recording the scene of a crime, so that the photographer registered a detailed overview. To this end, Bertillon recommended specific types of artificial illumination and photographic plates, in order to reduce glare and other distorting effects of light; affixing calibrated one-meter strips of paper to the walls or floor enabled the dimensions of the crime scene to be calculated from photographic evidence alone. Parisian interiors recorded in this way (FIG. 7.131) possess an eerie exactitude that exemplifies the legendary omniscience of the camera's panoptic eye. In the era of Vuillard and Bonnard, such mechanical intimacy is invasive and chilling.

The aesthetic range of the mechanical eye was

expanded in the service of science by Etienne-Jules Marey, a physiologist who developed a photomechanical device (a "rifle camera") to record movement. (His experiments originally derived from his attempts to develop a graphic method for recording temporal duration by hand.) As distinguished from the isolated, or "analytic," serial photographs by the American photographer Eadweard Muybridge, who had preceded him with studies of human and animal locomotion, Marey's images synthesize the sequential stages of continuous motion into a single frame. The first examples of the new "chronophotography" were executed in 1888, at his laboratory in the Parc des Princes (within the Bois du Boulogne), and

7.129

Edgar Degas (1834–1917)

*Portrait of Renoir and
Mallarmé, 1895*

Gelatin silver print,
7 x 5 in. (17.8 x 12.7 cm)
Bibliothèque Littéraire
Jacques Doucet





7.130

Jules Gervais-
Courtellemont
(1863–1931)

*Church of Saint Médard,
rue Mouffetard*

Autocrome
Collection Jules
Gervais-Courtellemont—
Cinémathèque
Robert-Lynen de la Ville
de Paris

Marey published his work in two books, *Le Vol des oiseaux* (1890; *The flight of birds*) and *Le Mouvement* (1894). At once spectral and mundane, the astonishing results reveal a world as haunting as Bertillon's, though recording different modes of perception. Fencers, bicycle riders, toddlers, dogs, cats, and bouncing balls—animate and inanimate bodies are represented, for the first time in a static image, with a past and a future (FIG. 7.132). These photographs exerted a profound attraction for Cubist and Futurist painters during the prewar years, many of whom sought to endow painting with a similar expansiveness.

Often described as protocinematic, Marey's static images permitted an observer to study otherwise imperceptible conditions and effects of motion. In contrast to Marey's analysis of movement, the cinema, which emerged during the 1890s, *reproduced* motion. (Curiously, the name awarded to the new camera-projector introduced by Louis Lumière, the *cinématographe*, means

“writing in movement,” showing, as with Marey, a conceptual relationship between film and nonrepresentational graphic notation.) Produced in France as entertainment rather than science by companies such as Lumière, Gaumont, and Pathé Frères, who sought to invent and market new technology, early films were characterized by simple candor: a self-contained event was presented from a single viewpoint by a stationary camera in an unchanging space, with little or no editing. Production largely corresponded to existing categories of entertainment culture at the fairground, the music hall, and the *café-concert*, where most films were shown in turn-of-the-century Paris; by the time of the war, the film industry had grown so significantly that many of these establishments were converted into movie palaces. Early cinematic “attractions” included *actualités* (topical subjects, travelogues, parades, ceremonies, and other current events as well as simple shots of daily life and local color; see figure 7.133), sports films, comic



films, trick films, erotic films, historical and religious subjects, and related genres. Shorts of this kind were either arranged into programs of their own or integrated with stage acts and attractions. At first, cinema was more a novelty than a self-conscious medium, but by the prewar period, the emergence of melodramatic narrative had brought movies into close proximity—and competition—with conventional theater.

After his application to purchase a *cinématographe* was denied, Georges Méliès, a magician who owned and managed the Robert-Houdin Théâtre, invented his own camera, built a studio (in Montreuil), and established a company for making and distributing trick and fantasy films, or *féeries*. By exploiting devices such as cutting, multiple exposure, and stop action, Méliès created purely cinematic illusions of disappearance and

7.131
 Alphonse Bertillon,
 (1853-1914)
 Colombes Case: The
 Dining Room
 Musée de la Préfecture
 de Police



7.132

Etienne-Jules Marey
(1830–1904)

Hammer Blow, c. 1895

Chromophotograph
Musée Marey, Beaune

transformation. Méliès himself was frequently featured, playing a variety of roles, including Satan, that enabled him to conflate the magician and the author as a single presence within the context of the film. Originally concerned with special effects alone, these films—including *Le Voyage dans la lune* (Trip to the moon) of 1902 (FIG. 7.134), one of his longest and most complex—came to incorporate a more prominent narrative element, albeit one resembling the tableau of a music-hall revue, complete with scantily clad women and flimsy sets.

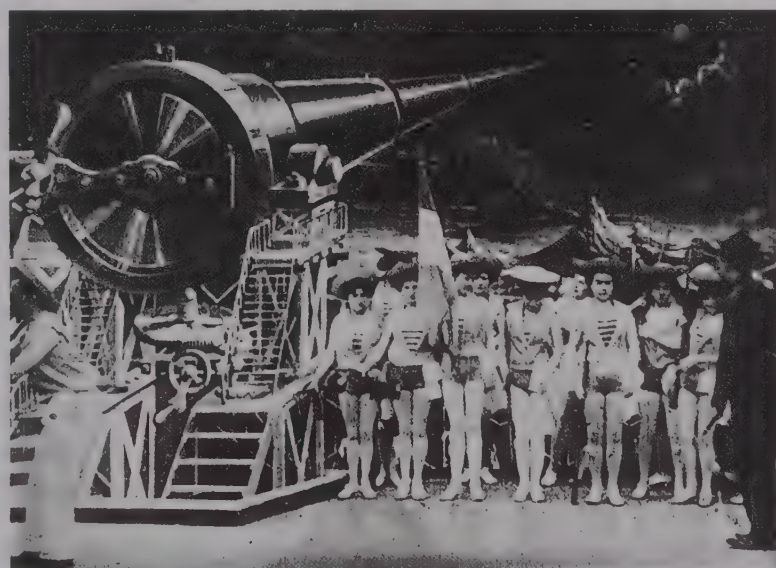
The trick films have a modernist air (popular with the Surrealists, they also have a certain relevance to later avant-garde cinema). Early animation, which was refined by Emile Cohl (working for Gaumont), was similarly concerned with novelty and the invention of startling effects, including the eerie juxtaposition of actors and cartoons (FIG. 7.135).¹²⁵ Whereas Méliès came to the cinema through stage magic, Cohl approached film through his work providing comic illustrations for periodicals such as *Le Chat noir* (The black cat); the

cinema was thus conditioned by the history of other arts, which in turn reappropriated the new medium. But Méliès also ventured into history and current events, with staged re-creations such as *L’Affaire Dreyfus* (FIG. 7.136) and *The Coronation of Edward VII*. This genre grew immensely popular, even if its fascination (narrative notwithstanding) essentially derived from a quality that distinguished the simplest film *actualité*—the apparitional simulation of real life, such as the image of a busy public square or the arrival of a train in a railroad station (the subject of the film short with which the Lumière brothers introduced the French public to cinema in the Salon Indien at the Grand Café on the boulevard des Capucines in 1895). This simulation was an aspect of the novelty of film experience that triggered both wonder and unease among early observers.¹²⁶

As the narrative structure of film grew more elaborate, new cinematic techniques allowed stories to be told with dynamic means, including the use of cutting to construct a sense of sequence, causality, and meaning. More complex narratives required longer films, many of which were based on plays and novels, and this in turn coincided with a move to legitimize the cinema. In fact, during the prewar period the literary adaptation, or *film d’esthétique*, was used by the French film industry in order to qualify film legally as an art, thereby enabling the collection of royalties. Movie houses were established by Pathé and others, eventually invalidating the legal distinction between theater and cinema (which had previously been classified and regulated with lower forms of entertainment) and encouraging regular attendance by an upscale audience.¹²⁷ Cinemas proliferated in Paris in particular, culminating in 1911 with the Gaumont Palace—the largest in the world, with a capacity of thirty-four hundred. Tales from history and the Bible, often based on celebrated works of fiction such as *Les Misérables* and *The Three Musketeers*, were now told through multiple-reel feature-length films on an epic scale.

Contemporary melodrama, less exalted in its pedigree, was the other dominant cinematic category. This included the crime film, which was often produced as a serial—a subgenre characterized by the rise of the criminal antihero. The standout remains *Fantômas*, a villainous master of disguise from pulp fiction created by the novelists Marcel Allain and Pierre Souvestre,

who published close to three dozen volumes between 1911 and 1913; several of these were adapted to film by the director Louis Feuillade—working for Gaumont—in 1913 (FIG. 7.137). The criminal mastermind *Fantômas* became a cult figure among the Cubist avant-garde. His power derives from a nineteenth-century fictional device, that of the protean observer, or “unseen seer,”



7.133 (above, top)
Louis Lumière (1864–1954)
Film still from *Paris*:
Place de la Concorde, c. 1897

7.134 (above)
Georges Méliès (1861–1938)
Film still from *Le Voyage dans la lune*
(*A Trip to the Moon*), 1902

7.135
 Emile Cohl (Emile
 Courtet) (1857–1938)
 Film still from *Les
 Locataires d'à
 côté* (The Next-Door
 Neighbors), 1909



a figure—detective or, more commonly, evildoer—who changes identity through disguise, achieving a kind of invisibility and omniscience. The prototype, in crime fiction, was Eugène Sue’s *Mystères de Paris*, and *Fantômas* is equally oriented toward Paris as a city of danger that has been commandeered from within by malevolent forces. Both the books and the films were noted for their realistic attention to Parisian locale—a nighttime gun battle on the quai

de Bercy, blood running in the fountains of the place de la Concorde, rooftop chase sequences, and menacing encounters in deserted stretches of not-yet-developed suburban space. Its “absurd and magical lyricism” (in the words of Jean Cocteau) gave *Fantômas* a mythic stature among modernists, who prized such new forms of urban commercial culture as a wholly original idiom of the modern imagination.¹²⁸

7.136
 Georges Méliès
 (1861–1938)
 Film still from
The Dreyfus Affair, 1899



Cette Notice, délivrée gratuitement avec le Programme, ne peut être vendue

GAUMONT PALACE

Les Grands Films Artistiques Gaumont



FANTÔMAS

III

LE MORT QUI TUE

7.137

Louis Feuillade
(1873-1925)

Cover of theater
program for *Fantômas*,
1913-14

Cinémathèque Française

7.138

Pablo Picasso
(1881-1973)

*"Ma Jolie" (Woman
with Zither or Guitar),*
winter 1911-12

Oil on canvas,
39 1/8 x 25 1/8 in.
(100 x 65.4 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; acquired
through the Lillie P. Bliss
Bequest

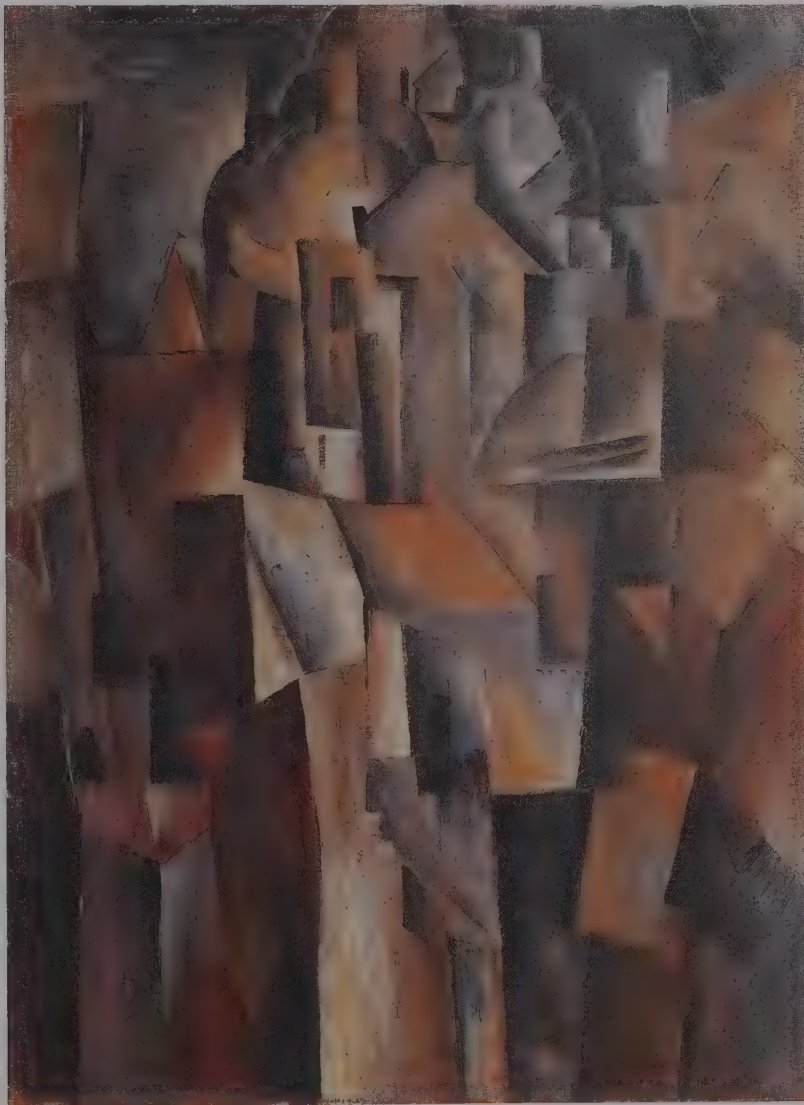


CUBISM : THE FRAGMENTED AND INSCRIBED CITY

Cubism proper emerged through the representation of architecture—specifically, Braque’s paintings of houses and trees in the southern town of L’Estaque, where he spent the summer of 1908. These were the works that Braque exhibited at Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler’s gallery that fall. They had been rejected by the selection committee of the Salon d’Automne, where the artist had originally hoped to make a public impression. Matisse, who sat on the jury, may have been the first

to describe them as an accumulation of “cubes,” though it was the critic Louis Vauxcelles who committed the remark to print, in a brief review of Braque’s show. The observation stuck, and the pejorative “Cubism” became the governing prewar epithet for the new art, even long after its implication of elementary geometry ceased to have any more than passing relevance to the pictures.

Cubic forms do, however, characterize the early Braques, and that simplified rendering of architectural



7.139

Georges Braque
(1882–1963)

*Le Sacré-Cœur de
Montmartre*, 1910

Oil on canvas,
21¼ x 16¼ in.
(55 x 41 cm)

Musée d’Art Moderne
de Lille Métropole,
Villeneuve d’Ascq;
gift of Geneviève and
Jean Masurel

volume carried into the summer of 1909, which Braque spent at the town of La Roche-Guyon in the Seine valley. L'Estaque and La Roche-Guyon had both been frequented by Cézanne during the 1880s, and from that master came the basic elements of the new style: a firm, dry, directional brush stroke; climbing vertical perspective; and open contours that wed form to the surface of the picture plane (as a result, the elements of Cubist images are always suspended in shallow space). Picasso achieved something similar during this period, also outside Paris, at La Rue des Bois in 1908 and in

1909 at the Spanish town of Horta de Ebro. Picasso also drew on the reductive manner of Henri Rousseau, for whom a rowdy banquet was held at the Bateau-Lavoir studio in November 1908—an event that virtually inaugurated Cubism.

Cubism is alive with Cézanne's ideas about the malleable nature of pictorial form and space. When Braque turned his attention to the Paris cityscape, as in his view of the church of Sacré-Cœur in Montmartre (FIG. 7.139), he reduced it to discrete but transparent facets and planes, dispersing them across a field of



7.140
Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
Bottle of Pernod and Glass,
1912
Oil on canvas, 18 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 13 in.
(46 x 33 cm)
The State Hermitage
Museum, St. Petersburg



7.141

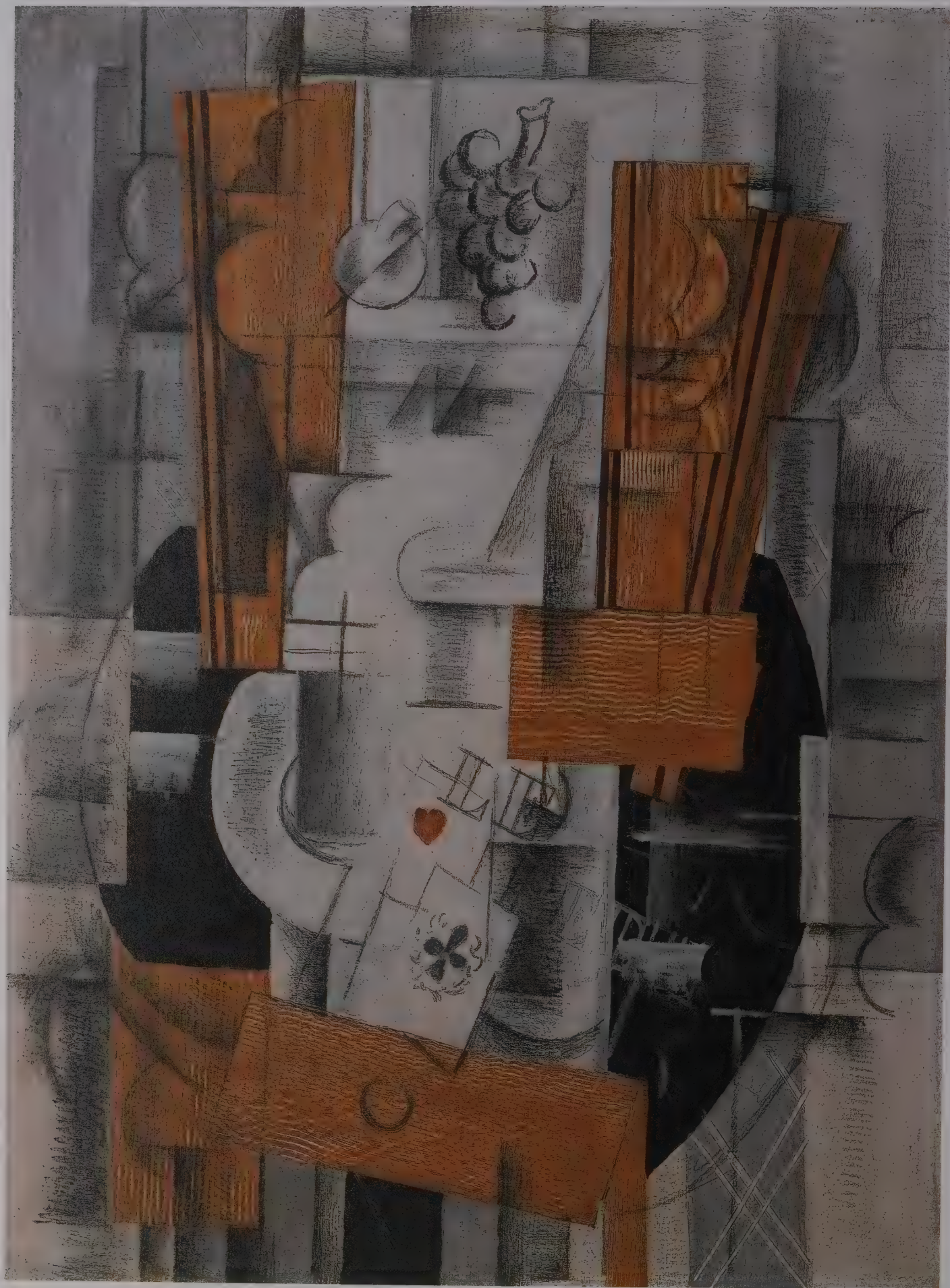
Juan Gris (1887-1927)

The Siphon, 1913

Oil on canvas,
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.

(81 x 65 cm)

Collection Rose Art
Museum, Brandeis
University, Waltham,
Massachusetts; gift of
Edgar Kaufman, Jr., 1959





7.142 (opposite)

Georges Braque (1882–1963)

Still Life with Fruit Dish and Ace of Clubs, 1913

Oil, gouache, and charcoal on canvas, 31½ x 23¼ in.

(80 x 59 cm)

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges

Pompidou

7.143 (above)

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Glass and Bottle of Suze, 1912

Pasted paper, gouache, and charcoal on card, 25¾ x 19¼ in.

(64.5 x 50.2 cm)

Washington University Gallery of Art, St. Louis, Missouri;

University purchase, Kende Sale Fund

flickering lights and darks. Permitting abstract pictorial structure to infiltrate his representation of the church, Braque reconfigured the building as a series of shifting elements, rendering it unstable and elusive. In Analytic Cubism, between 1909 and 1911, the Cubist style grew increasingly abstract, with objects and space both represented by gray and other fragments of pictorial form. Lines drift away from their conventional function as

descriptive contours. Solids and voids mingle with one another in a dark but variably illuminated realm.

The restless ambiguity of the Cubist syntax is especially haunting when applied to human subjects. Picasso created many portraits during this period, including a series depicting Paris art dealers who represented his work as well as a number of unidentified figures. These are searching images, in which various representational



7.144

Juan Gris (1887–1927)

The Man at the Café,

February 1914

Oil and pasted paper on

canvas, 39 x 28 1/4 in.

(99 x 72 cm)

Private collection

clues allow the viewer only to glimpse, rather than contemplate, the physiognomy of an individual sitter. They are also jeux d'esprit, in which aspects of character coalesce amid the disintegration of tangible form. But by late 1911, in a work such as Picasso's *"Ma Jolie"* (*Woman with a Guitar or Zither*) (FIG. 7.138), the body relinquished its identity as a discrete object and was subjected to an astonishing degree of abstraction.

The inscription at the bottom of the picture (*ma jolie*, or "my pretty one") is derived from a popular song that was being sung at the Olympia music hall in Paris that fall; it adds a touch of sentiment, even poignancy, to the image (which may represent Picasso's companion Eva Gouel, whom the artist referred to in letters as "jolie Eva"). It also introduces an element of popular culture, which Picasso and Braque would repeatedly cite to ironize the rarefied Cubist idiom. Moreover, as scholars have long observed, the startling presence of the typography reminds the viewer that Cubism is, like language, a system of signs—that all forms of pictorial representation are languages dependent on artificial conventions and codes, no matter how much more "realistic" than the Cubists their authors might claim to be. From this point through 1914, words and word fragments served simultaneously formal, conceptual, and rhetorical functions in Cubist works, allowing artists to address the experience of visual culture in Paris through the cubist idiom.¹²⁹ During this period, still lifes dominated the Cubism of Picasso and Braque, establishing a close rapport between the studio and the café.

It would be difficult to overestimate the role of the café in the experience of the Parisian avant-garde. A forum for the exchange of ideas, the café was often indispensable to the progress of a new school. Since the Revolution, and especially during subsequent periods of social turmoil, the café had been identified with the life of intellectual (often specifically political) groups, and it was an acknowledged setting for both private conspiracy and public debate. By the mid-nineteenth century, the café-bar had also come under social criticism as a place of ruination, a seductive yet toxic haven for the underemployed or overexploited working class—the sort of place immortalized by Zola in his novel *L'Assommoir* (1877). Alcohol (especially absinthe, a cheap hallucinogen that was outlawed in 1914) nourished the café's reputation as a liberating refuge. The persist-

ent success of the café as an academy of counterculture can be traced in arts and letters from realism to Surrealism, and in many cases certain factions or groups were closely associated with particular cafés.

Picasso and Braque exploited the public and private dualism of café culture by envisioning the café and the studio as a contiguous realm. Elements from this milieu occupy Cubist pictures from 1912 to 1914 like pieces on a game board, implementing strategies of cerebral play. Musical instruments, bottles, absinthe glasses, match holders, playing cards, and dice serve active rather than passive roles. Previously familiar as objects of absorption, distraction, and colloquial exchange, they animate the

7-145

Francisco Tamagno
(1851–?)

Poster for "L'Absinthe
Cusenier," 1896

Color lithograph,
50 3/8 x 37 1/8 in.
(128.5 x 95 cm)

Musée de la Publicité



7.146

Sonia Delaunay
(1885–1979)

"La Prose du
Transsibérien et de la
petite Jehanne de
France," illuminated
prose-poem by
Blaise Cendrars, 1913

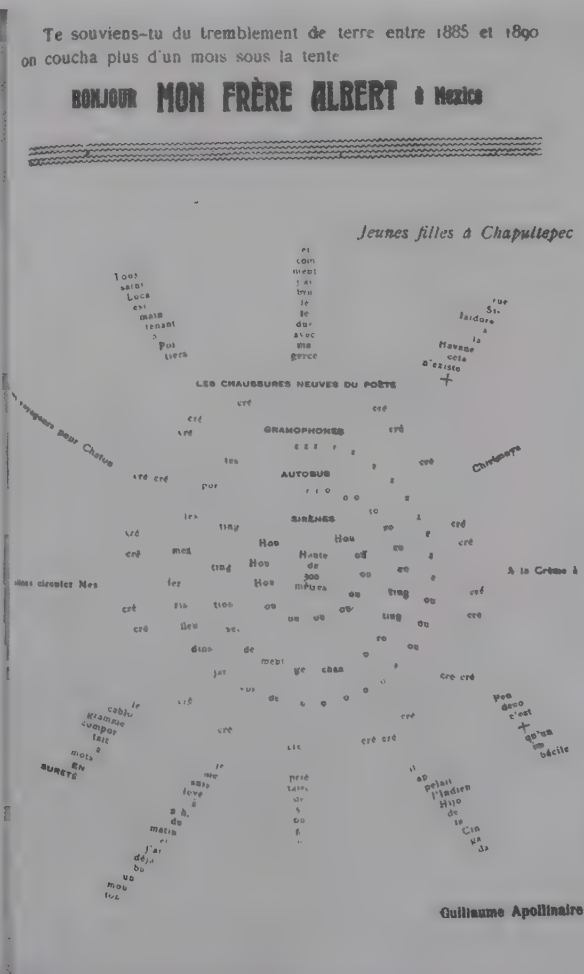
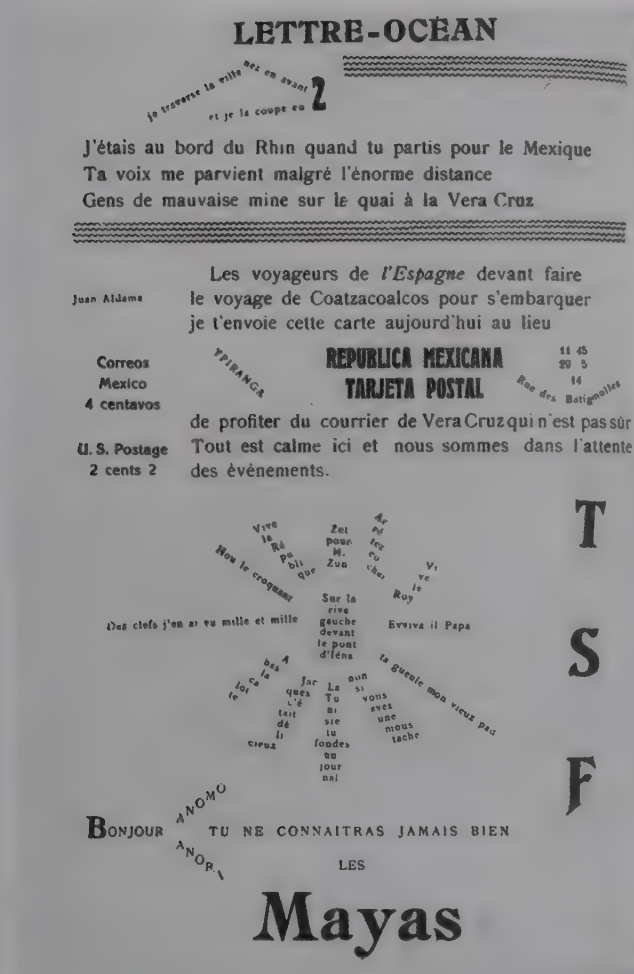
Watercolor, text
printed on simulated
Japan paper, bound
in painted parchment,
76 1/16 x 7 7/32 in.
(199 x 36 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



tabletop, trading identities and navigating the uncertainties of pictorial space. The invention of collage, a new genre, raised the stakes. In 1912 the transparency of Analytic Cubism was infiltrated by broad planes, passages of color, and material fragments, including bits of pasted paper printed or painted with imitation wood grain and marble (FIG. 7.140). Even though such fragments add startling tangibility to a Cubist picture, they are no more “real” (no less representational) than the drawn or painted passages. Indeed, such imitative techniques were originally conceived to function as cheap trompe-l’œil alternatives to wood paneling, for example, on the wall of a café. Such devices were the tools of the painter-decorator (Braque’s father was a member of this profession), whose deadpan imitation of other materials provided the Cubist with a means to subvert the model of the *artiste-peintre*—the pretentious Salon painter

whose own tricks represented a facile and debased imitation of high style.¹³⁰

The practice of the painter-decorator was applied in a literal fashion by Juan Gris in works such as *The Siphon* (FIG. 7.141), in which imitation wood and marble fulfill the same descriptive role as in an actual room. In collage, however, pasted fragments are generally more autonomous and abstract; they signify rather than depict. In this way they remain free, within the Cubist matrix, to stand for more than one thing at a time. In Braque’s *Still Life with Fruit Dish and Ace of Clubs* (FIG. 7.142), which is at once a drawing and a painting in grisaille, floating pieces of pasted imitation wood grain can be identified with the wall as well as with various parts of the table. Eventually the pasted repertoire came to include fragments of newspaper, wallpaper, sheet music, labels, handbills,



7.147
Guillaume Apollinaire
(1880–1918)
Calligram: “Lettre-
Océan,” poem published
in *Les Soirées de Paris*,
June 1914
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

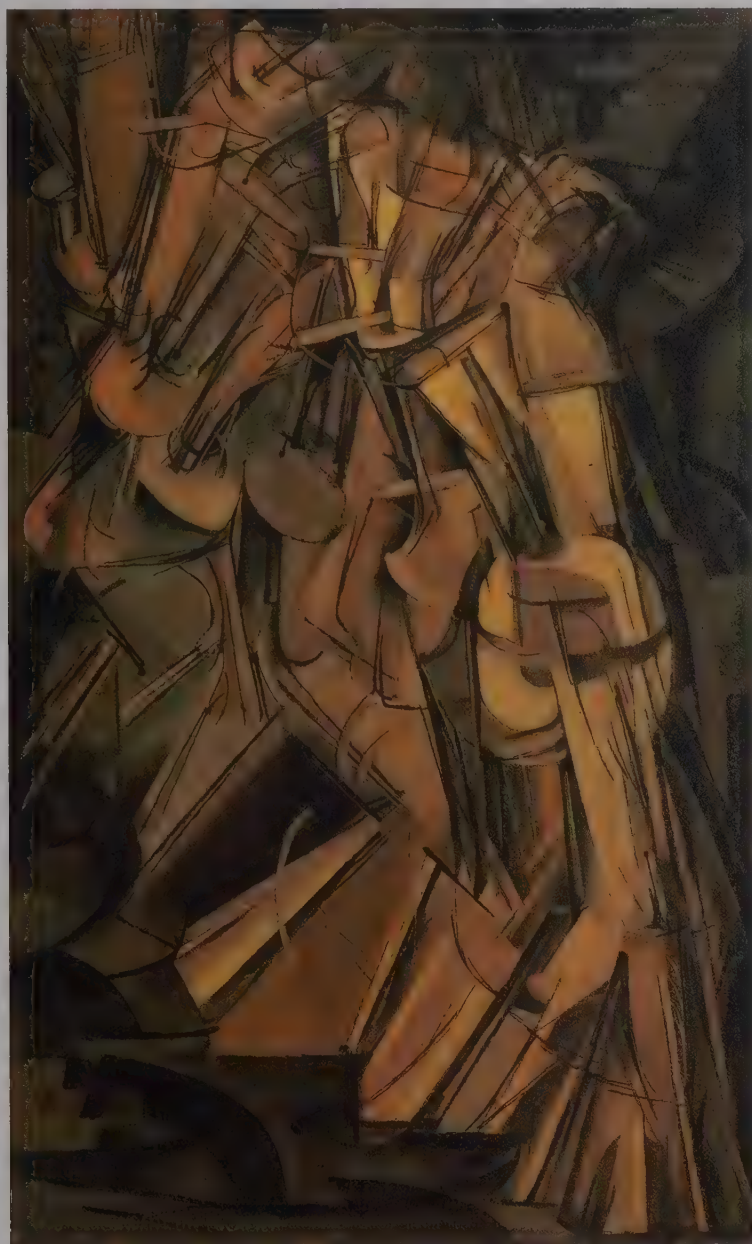


and calling cards, each serving a multiple function (FIG. 7.143).

Picasso and Braque also incorporated printed typography in the form of brand names and newsprint, using playful verbal puns and allusions as counterparts to their pictorial devices. The word fragment *jou*, which frequently appears, was adapted by Picasso from the newspaper *Le Journal* and suggests the words *jouer* or *jeu*—the act of playing or the game itself. Picasso was generally more exuberant than Braque, whose pictures

can be haunting and reflective. But both brought high irony to the table, not least by adapting the cheap ephemera of mass culture to an epistemological inquiry of subtle wit and lasting implication. The work of 1912–14 is confidential in nature rather than grandiose, a private conversation conducted in the language of double entendre. With relief sculpture, Picasso and Braque were able to position the Cubist object in real space, as studio photographs show. Rather than carved or modeled, these works were constructed from

7.148 (opposite)
Francis Picabia (1879–1953)
Udnie, or The Dance, 1913
Oil on canvas, 118 x 118 in.
(300 x 300 cm)
Musée Nationale d'Art
Moderne, Centre Georges
Pompidou



7.149
Marcel Duchamp
(1887–1968)
*Nude Descending a Staircase
No. 2*, 1912
Oil on canvas, 57 x 35 in.
(146 x 89 cm)
Philadelphia Museum
of Art; Louise and
Walter Arensberg Collection

flat planes of paper, cardboard, and wood, a procedure that eliminated coherent mass and thus altered the nature of sculptural form. A still-life by Braque, attached to a wall, incorporated the corner of the room, so that it seemed to contain the work as if it were a real still life; yet the sculpture also approximated—in a visual pun—the folding and eliding planes of Cubist pictorial space. If the Cubist café was a kind of atelier, then constructions such as this permitted the two places to merge.

Certain cafés and bistros in Montmartre—such as the Hermitage, Chez Azon, and L'Ami Emile—were regularly frequented by members of the Picasso circle, including Gris, who moved from Madrid to Paris in 1906 and soon settled at the Bateau-Lavoir. According to all accounts, conversation there frequently took the form of conspiratorial exchanges conducted in a *ton de blague*, an ironic voice reserved for insiders alone and one that was explicitly associated with the novelty of the new art—the language of the studio, still largely incomprehensible to most observers. Gris's *Man at the Café* (FIG. 7.144) virtually allegorizes this idea. Painted in trompe-l'œil, layered sections reveal themselves like posters torn from a wall. The navel of the picture is a mug of beer, around which the composition rotates. It is some time before we make out the subject: amid the simulated wood grain (two varieties here, painted and combed), a man in a fedora sits reading the newspaper *Le Matin*. His face and body are hidden behind the paper, over the top of which his hat appears, while his right hand—grasping the newspaper—is visible just below the masthead. “Works of art can no longer be faked,” the headline reads; the article proposes establishing a police photo archive for privately owned works of art, but the title is an appropriate gloss on the strategies of Cubism. The sitter, a kind of sandwich man, is conflated with his setting, which has been transformed into a sequence of planar surfaces (both he and his shadow are mere silhouettes). Gris's subject should be compared to advertising images of the day, such as Tamagno's iconic poster for *Absinthe Cusenier* (FIG. 7.145), not to belabor the relative eccentricity of Cubism but to show that the urban iconography of Cubism had long been standardized by contemporary commercial culture. Nonetheless, in the context of Cubism as a hermetic art, Gris's subject possesses the disguised presence of a spy. During this period members of

the Picasso circle formed the Société des Amis de Fantômas, named for the fictional villain of Louis Feuillade's serial. A metaphor for the stealthy public life of an encrypted art, Fantômas is clearly the elusive genius of Gris's café.

“Picasso and Braque introduce lettering from signs and other inscriptions in their works of art,” Apollinaire wrote at this time, “because in the modern city, the inscription, the signboard, advertising play a very important artistic role.”¹³¹ Apollinaire, who was an enthusiastic supporter of the new art, wrote about Cubism in both theoretical and journalistic terms for various daily papers and small reviews, including *Les Soirées de Paris*, which he founded with André Billy and René Dalize and edited at the Café de Flore on the boulevard Saint-Germain. In 1913 he published the book *Les Peintres cubistes*, a highly impressionistic account that reads—in keeping with Apollinaire's journalistic style—like the spirited chronicle of a wry but passionate *amateur*. Now sometimes unfairly maligned for having perpetrated discredited truisms about the formal development of Cubism, Apollinaire transformed its origins into a boulevard tale of discovery and invention. His critic's voice and his poet's voice were one and the same.

Apollinaire's simple observation emphasizes that the commercial vernacular of brand names, logos, and headlines used in Cubism reflected an aspect of Parisian visual culture that had long been associated with the figure of the *flâneur*, for whom wandering the city streets was likened to reading a text, one that reveals the complex visual discourse of modernity. The advertising in newspapers, handbills, posters, and billboards that inundated Paris toward the end of the nineteenth century and during the prewar period was also assailed by critics as a public menace. Only a short time after Gustave Kahn and others described the Art Nouveau poster as a modern fresco, the daily press ran long articles decrying the deleterious visual effects of advertising on the Paris street. The backlash was, of course, partly motivated by the preservationists of old Paris, for whom Paris had generally changed for the worse. Progressive building codes enacted in 1902, they believed, had resulted in large, ungainly edifices that were blocking cherished perspectives and historic monuments, while advertising defaced the buildings themselves.¹³² As a

7.150 (opposite)
Gino Severini
(1883–1966)
Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin, 1912
Oil on canvas,
63 3/8 x 61 1/2 in.
(161.6 x 156.2 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; acquired
through the Lillie P. Bliss
Bequest



result, preservation had become a topic of parliamentary debate and a lively issue in the press.

In fact, new regulations were approved by municipal authorities during the years of high Cubism. The handbill, for example, was blamed for flooding the boulevards with litter and subjected to severe restrictions in 1912. Commercialism notwithstanding, printed advertising of this kind—handbills, posters, billboards—was also portrayed by Apollinaire, in the poem *Zône*, as a kind of street verse:

You read prospectuses catalogues and posters which
shout aloud / Here is poetry this morning and for
prose there are the newspapers¹³³

In turn, the bold typography of advertising infiltrated Apollinaire's experiments with visual poetry, the so-called calligrams, in which the visual dynamism of commercial language was applied to pictorial ends. In the calligram "Lettre-Océan" (FIG. 7.147), which was printed in *Les Soirées de Paris*, mixed typography heightens the astonishing layout—a configuration of words that, as Roger Shattuck has shown, pictorially represents the Eiffel Tower and the Great Wheel (see FIG. 7.57).¹³⁴ Here envisioned from an aerial view, the tower is made to resemble the spoked wheel, an unexpected resemblance that also serves to introduce a Cubist-like shift in spatial orientation between two

7.151

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

Rooftops of Paris, 1912

Oil on canvas,

36 1/4 x 25 1/4 in.

(92 x 65.5 cm)

Musée National d'Art

Moderne, Centre

Georges Pompidou;

Nadia Léger Collection





pages of text. Cubist pictorial space, which reconfigured the picture plane and the printed page, was understood to have been partly derived from the modernist's empirical experience of the city. Works such as "Lettre-Océan" present a remarkable new idiom of word and image. By showing but not describing the tower and the wheel, "Lettre-Océan" suggests that Paris itself could be addressed as a living calligram, thanks to a new proliferation of the graphic word. Finally, the technology of communication in general is also implicated in

Apollinaire's poem: a *lettre-océan* is a form of wireless ship-to-shore correspondence, while "TSF," which appears in the center of the poem, stands for *télégraphie sans fils* (wireless telegraphy)—the Eiffel Tower had just been equipped to send transmissions of this kind. Suspended within ambiguities of space and time, poetic utterance is endowed with a global reach.

Something similarly ambitious was achieved by the poet Blaise Cendrars, much of whose verse assimilated the brusque, fragmented dialect of billboards,

7.152

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

Contrast of Forms, 1913

Oil on canvas,
39½ x 32 in.

(100.3 x 81.1 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; Philip L.
Goodwin Collection



7.153

Robert Delaunay
(1885–1941)

The City of Paris, 1912

Oil on canvas.

105 x 159 1/16 in.

(267 x 406 cm)

Musée National d'Art

Moderne, Centre

Georges Pompidou

newspapers, and telegrams (newly invented genres included the *poème-réclame* and the *télégramme-poème*). In collaboration with Sonia Terk Delaunay, the Cubist painter and graphic designer, Cendrars also originated a posterlike hybrid of the illustrated book. Using a form of Cubism developed with her husband, Robert Delaunay, she illuminated Cendrars's great prose poem of 1913, "La Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France" (FIG. 7.146). The work, dubbed a *poème-tableau* ("poem-painting"), was issued as a narrow, six-and-a-half-foot (two-meter)-tall foldout, in which text and image can be both perceived as an abstract whole and assimilated in sequence over time, like a reel of film. In this regard it actually mimics the premise of the poem itself; Cendrars's first-person account of a train trip across Russia in 1904, during the Russo-Japanese War. The narrative is strewn with observations of the journey and layered with quasi-autobiographical memories and fantasies of other places and times. Returning to Paris at the end of the poem, Cendrars is overcome in his itinerancy by the sadness of a perpetual nostalgia. From an

unnamed train station, he makes his way into the night, tormented by an elusive love. He does not inhabit the city so much as haunt it. The last line (and Delaunay's final image) contains an apparition of the Eiffel Tower—here described as a "Gibbet"—and the Great Wheel. These two monuments of upbeat technological advance now represent Paris, in dark and elusive terms, as a place of eternal return for the lost or wandering soul.

By 1912 various schools of Cubist painting had emerged in Paris. Picasso and Braque assiduously avoided exhibiting their work at the seasonal Salons (their dealer, Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, refused to submit them to public derision and ridicule from the uncomprehending press), but other varieties of Cubism were represented there in strength. The painters Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger—whose own book about Cubist painting, *Du Cubisme* (1912), appeared before Apollinaire's—came to represent the public face of Cubism for many spectators. In 1911 they succeeded in coercing the voting members of the Société des Artistes Indépendants to gather Cubist pictures into a single

room at the Salon, the now-infamous Salle VIII, establishing a precedent for such groupings throughout the prewar period. As a result, Cubism became a topic of controversy; a heated debate even roiled the Chambre des Députés, where some parliamentarians complained that modern art was a hoax that had besmirched the exhibition halls of Paris. Cubism (like the building codes of 1902 and the proliferation of advertising) was said to have created a visual blight.

Much like the modernist arts-and-letters milieu of the 1890s, the Cubist epoch was characterized by the

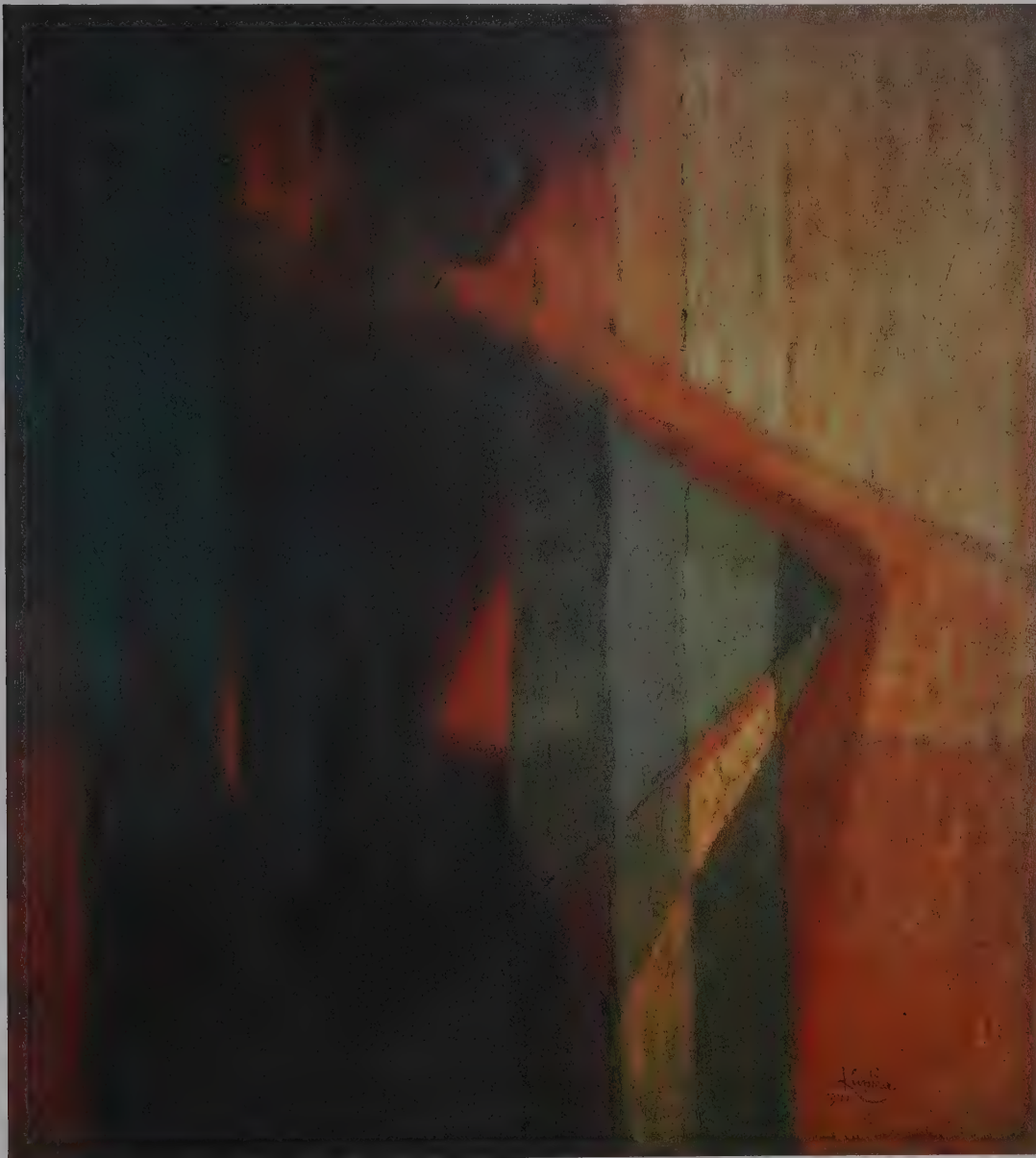
continuing phenomenon of avant-garde gatherings and groups. Indeed, a number of Salon Cubists, including Delaunay, formed their aesthetic identities at the Closerie des Lilas, a café in Montparnasse that was home to the lively soirées of the literary review *Vers et prose*, where Cubists sat down with well-known members of the Symbolist generation. In addition, Gleizes hosted meetings at his studio in suburban Courbevoie that were attended by painters, poets, and critical supporters of Cubism such as Roger Allard and Alexandre Mercereau. The Cubists of Salle VIII — including

7.154

František (Franz) Kupka
(1871–1957)

Planes of Color 1910–11

Oil on canvas,
43½ x 39⅞ in.
(110 x 100 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou





7.155

Robert Delaunay
(1885-1941)

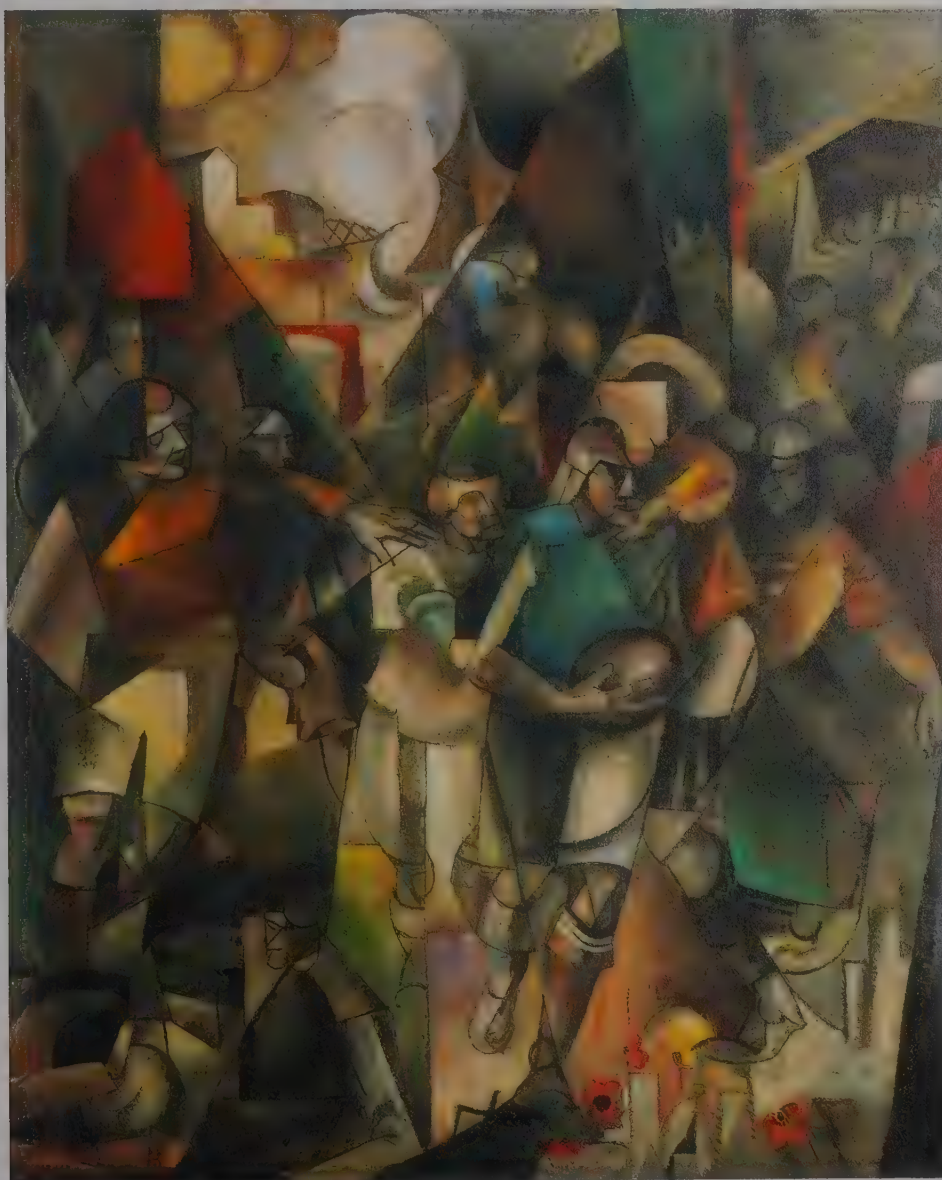
The Cardiff Team, 1913

Oil on canvas,
128¼ x 81⅞ in.
(326 x 208 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

Gleizes, Metzinger, Fernand Léger, Francis Picabia, Marcel Duchamp, and Duchamp's brother Jacques Villon—also met at Villon's home in suburban Puteaux. The Czech émigré František Kupka, a pioneer of abstraction, lived next door and often joined the proceedings. For the sake of solidarity among the young artists, exhibitions outside the Salon were loosely organized along ideological lines; the large and important Section d'Or show at the Galerie La Boétie in October 1912 was initiated by the Puteaux group but also included other Cubists such as Gris, Roger de la Fresnaye, and André Lhote.

The Cubists were competing at this moment with another avant-garde school for the attention of the often-hostile daily press. Indeed, it was partly their contempt for the enemies of modernism that led the Italian Futurists to storm Paris, mounting a philistine-bating publicity campaign of manifestos, speeches, and debates and briefly seizing the avant-garde spotlight. Critical response to exhibitions of Futurist art at Bernheim-Jeune and the Galerie La Boétie made the movement a succès de scandale. Led by the truculent poet-critic F. T. Marinetti (whose typographically innovative verse incorporated the new language of advertising and



7.156
Albert Gleizes
(1881–1953)
Football Players, 1912–13
Oil on canvas, 89 x
72 in. (226.1 x 182.9 cm)
National Gallery of Art,
Washington, D.C.; Ailsa
Mellon Bruce Fund



telegraphy), the Futurists were self-proclaimed prophets of modernity. The work of painters such as Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, and Giacomo Balla was devoted to dynamism as a force of psychic and physical sensation, one peculiarly relevant to the conditions of modern urban life. Prior to their arrival in Paris, Futurist painters had worked in a synthetic manner, joining a Divisionist technique to the moody atmospherics of Symbolism. Once exposed to Cubism, which they encountered while visiting for their exhibition at Bernheim-Jeune in early

1912, they quickly adopted the Cubist interpenetration of matter and space as a device for representing movement and change.

The avant-garde and popular press of the period records many quarrels and letters to the editor concerning the precedence of Cubism or Futurism in matters of stylistic innovation, and the work of both camps reflects a fairly significant degree of exchange. Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase No. 2* (FIG. 7.149), for example, explicitly shares the Futurist adaptation

7.157 (opposite)

Roger de la Fresnaye
(1885–1925)

The Conquest of the Air,
1913

Oil on canvas, 92 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 77 in.
(235.9 x 195.6 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; Mrs. Simon
Guggenheim Fund



7.158

Robert Delaunay
(1885–1941)

Simultaneous Window,
1912

Oil on canvas and wood,
18 $\frac{3}{32}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (46 x 40 cm)
Kunsthalle, Hamburg

of chronophotography for representing successive stages of movement (the Futurists themselves expressly prohibited the nude in their widely published First Manifesto of 1910, which suggests that Duchamp's work may have been something of a parody). Duchamp's friend Picabia, in a remarkable series of pictures based on procession and dance (FIG. 7.148), approximated movement by using fragmented and sequential forms that are further animated by boldly flickering lights and darks.

Returning to Paris from a trip to New York in 1913, he produced a culminating group of large-scale canvases that are at once biomorphic and mechanomorphic yet ultimately abstract. Based, he said, on memories from his New York sojourn (he was impressed by the brashness of the American urban scene), they represent hermetic worlds of perpetual motion, suggesting that the mechanisms of consciousness and recall were technological.

The Parisian Futurist par excellence was the Italian painter Gino Severini, who settled in Paris in 1906. Severini was an habitué at the Closerie des Lilas, where he eventually joined the Montparnasse Cubists and met his future wife, daughter of the venerated poet Paul Fort, who presided over the *Vers et prose* evenings. Largely based on the boulevards and nightlife of Paris, Severini's paintings possess an urbane refinement that distinguishes them from the work of his fellow Futurists. He appropriated the Cubist dematerialization of form in order to evoke the city's multiple sensations and perpetual flux, but his technique is polished and his images convey an impression of delight. The culmination of Severini's responses to the Paris dance-hall scene is *Dynamic Hieroglyph of the Bal Tabarin* (FIG. 7.150), which also incorporates typography and elements of collage—sequins applied to the surface of the picture give it an appropriately modish flair. Like the artist himself, Severini's pictures were nattily dressed.

Léger pursued dynamism through the dynamic contrast of abstract pictorial elements, rather than the representation of bodies in motion. His early Cubist work includes a number of Paris views (FIG. 7.151), which already incorporate his distinctive opposition of blocky forms such as curves and angles or solids and voids. By 1913, with his remarkable series *Contrast of Forms* (FIG. 7.152), which is limited to a palette of primary and secondary colors, Léger applied this

approach to pictures possessed of an unusual degree of both energy and bulk. These canvases are virtually abstract, although the artist compared them to other developments in visual culture. For example, architecture, he wrote, had recently been stripped of false traditionalism (in the form of ornamentation) and now achieved a balance of mass and line derived from functional considerations alone.¹³⁵

In contrast to Léger, Gleizes, Metzinger, and others approached Cubism as a pseudoscience of non-Euclidean pictorial space, which was sometimes characterized during the period as occupying a "fourth dimension." Pseudoscience was a significant cultural phenomenon, but its measurable visual impact on the new art is elusive. As some observers later recalled, science was more often than not a subject for idle speculation—and even (as in Jarry's "Pataphysics") the object of satire—at the studio and the café, rather than serious study.¹³⁶ Kupka, however, explicitly made use of chronophotography, X-ray technology (which had been invented in 1895), the optics of color, and microbiology (as well as the occult and esoteric sciences, such as Theosophy, then in vogue). For Kupka, something of a latter-day Symbolist, science had revealed the inner life of matter, yielding discoveries that could be exploited for the pictorial representation of cosmic order. In works such as *Planes of Color* (FIG. 7.154), which was exhibited at the Indépendants in 1912, the artist applied transparency and repetition in order to portray the perception of motion and time through a chromatic progression of prismatic color. It was but a short step to geometric abstraction, which Kupka would refer to as an "other reality."

Although the marriage of art and science in Robert Delaunay's work was equally far-reaching, his ambitions were somewhat less abstruse. Delaunay brought to Cubism a spectrum of pure color based on the same researches in optics that had fascinated Seurat and Signac. In early paintings, he adapted a kind of sculptural fragmentation related to the Cézannesque Cubism of Picasso and Braque. But between 1912 and 1914, as solid form gave way to prismatic transparency, Delaunay's pictures grew increasingly evanescent, an effect that Apollinaire referred to as "Orphic Cubism." (Cézanne remained in evidence, but the emphasis shifted from the master's oil painting technique to his

7.159 (opposite)

Marc Chagall
(1887–1985)

*Paris through the
Window*, 1913

Oil on canvas, 53½ x
55¾ in. (135.8 x 141.4 cm)
Solomon R. Guggenheim
Museum, New York; gift,
Solomon R.
Guggenheim, 1937



work in watercolor.)

Unlike any of the other avant-gardists, Delaunay explicitly dedicated his art to the subject of Paris, creating sequences and series based on the city's topography; his works feature the church of Saint-Séverin and the Eiffel Tower, in particular, as well as rooftop views and images of advertising in the city streets. In *The City of Paris* (FIG. 7.153), which was shown at the 1912 Indépendants, Delaunay placed modern style in the service of conventional allegory, projecting the classical three Graces over a monumental cityscape that was partly copied from Rousseau's *Myself: Portrait-Landscape* (see FIG. 7.10) (Delaunay greatly admired the Douanier and owned a number of his works). Merging the ancient and the modern through devices such as transparency and the interpenetration of disparate images and views, Delaunay hoped to synthesize the real contemporary experience of Paris with the life of the city in history and myth. Layering the past and the present in this way, the artist was searching for the pictorial means with which to represent the simultaneity of multiple spatial and temporal experiences, a preoccupation of many Cubist and Futurist painters during this period. *The Cardiff Team* (FIG. 7.155) is no less allegorical than *The City of Paris*, but it is a more sophisticated formal expression of simultaneity. This picture presents a compendium of motifs from modern culture: advertising, engineering, aviation (FIG. 7.157), and sports (FIG. 7.156), an iconography that recurs throughout Cubist painting in Paris. In *The Cardiff Team*, as Delaunay later observed, these elements are joined by a synthetic rather than fragmentary pictorial rhythm: "The surface of the picture is living and simultaneous. The whole picture is a unity of rhythm."¹³⁷

Gradually, however, Delaunay allowed his stylistic means to supersede the iconography of modernity. With the Window series, his work verged on pure abstraction. In an extensive sequence of paintings, some of which are panoramic in format (FIG. 7.153), the Eiffel Tower

and Great Wheel can be glimpsed through shifting and overlapping planes of prismatic color and atmospheric form. Not only did the artist adapt a conventional motif—the window view—to almost visionary ends, he modified the post-Renaissance conceit of the picture plane as a transparent window through which the viewer sees an extension of his own world, converting the window/canvas into something like a transfiguring lens. The structural transparency of the tower and the wheel provides an ideal metaphor for Delaunay's open and fragmented representation of form, just as the soaring vantage of the two monuments connotes Delaunay's abstracted vision of the city. Disembodied and vertiginous, the Window pictures represent modern engineering as offering a flight above the limits of the material world; the elevated or aerial view would become a standard analogue of such flight during and after the war.

Blaise Cendrars described Delaunay's Window series as showing the artist to have been intoxicated by the "ocean of light that washes over Paris."¹³⁸ For painters, poets, preservationists, and urban reformers, modern Paris had become a visionary place, a city dwelling less in the present than in the past and the future, less in sameness than in change. Having adapted Delaunay's syntax to the folkloric culture of his homeland, the Russian Marc Chagall envisioned modern Paris as the setting for a Cubistic fable. Chagall's own *Paris through the Window* (FIG. 7.159), which features the Eiffel Tower, is more anecdotal than Delaunay's and less positivistic. Paris is made to resemble Vitebsk, the town in Russia where the artist was born and where the characters in the picture seem to have originated. The two-faced man—probably the artist himself—suggests that Cubist simultaneity now pertains to the duality of modernity and nostalgia.¹³⁹ In Paris, the capital of the avant-garde, such a duality was especially relevant to an avant-garde émigré from the Old World like Chagall.



7.160

Henri Matisse
(1869–1954)

View of Notre-Dame,
spring 1914

Oil on canvas, 58 x 37 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.
(147.3 x 94.3 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; purchase,
acquired through the
Lillie P. Bliss Bequest, and
the Henry Ittleson, A.
Conger Goodyear, Mr. and
Mrs. Robert Sinclair Funds,
and the Anna Erickson
Levene Bequest given in
memory of her husband,
Dr. Phoebe Aaron
Theodore Levene

EPILOGUE:

THE MELANCHOLY OF DEPARTURE

The very concept of the new Paris is as old as the city itself, where each layer of change has been thought to signify the disappearance of the “real” Paris. Every transformation of Paris has been freighted with the history of transformations past and a complementary sense of ambivalence or loss. Ironically, while “new Paris” is old, the idea of old Paris—*vieux Paris*—wasn’t formulated until the age of progress.

Modernist images of Paris sometimes manifest the ambiguous identity of the city as both old and new. In 1913 the Cubist sculptor Raymond Duchamp-Villon compared the Eiffel Tower to Notre-Dame—two works of exalted genius that speak to one another across the cityscape and across time.¹⁴⁰ One year later, in Matisse’s *View of Notre-Dame* (FIG. 7.160), the cathedral is reduced to a modern hieroglyph. This is a radically distilled image of the Seine and Notre-Dame as seen from the artist’s studio window on the quai Saint-Michel, to which he had recently returned. Reflecting the artist’s interest in Cubism, which was heightened by his friendship with Gris, the picture’s simplicity and grandeur are astonishing. We might even say, in keeping with Léger’s reference to architecture and the new art, that the cathedral has been stripped to bare essentials. Still, the painting is a complex one: the handling is both sumptuous and dry, and the overall effect is monumental yet movingly tentative, almost childlike. Matisse’s streaked field of blue confounds surface and depth, and it is inscribed with sight lines that stray into an unmapable distance; extrapolated from the trajectory of the quays as seen from above, they have become orthogonals that will never converge. Both the cathedral and a single spot of green foliage are set off by clouds of black, as if an element of chiaroscuro had been contemplated, then denied.

Giorgio de Chirico employed a similar perspectival ambiguity in his large painting *Gare Montparnasse*

(*The Melancholy of Departure*) (FIG. 7.161), in which the yellow avenue on the right is more a tilting than a receding plane. (Indeed, the two works share this precise spatial construction with Cézanne’s *Still Life with Plaster Cast* [see FIG. 7.20]; are de Chirico’s bananas the vestige of a still life?) De Chirico arrived in Paris in 1911 and soon joined the circle of *Les Soirées de Paris*; Apollinaire had reviewed his work favorably at the Salons. The originality of de Chirico’s vision was promptly recognized by many in the avant-garde community, who found the artist’s pictures to be peculiarly modern, despite de Chirico’s essential disregard of the formal devices of Cubism. Sharply delineated yet largely devoid of texture and detail, these images simultaneously suggest and defeat a consistent representation of urban space: shaped by buildings and shadows, his perspectives plunge and wander, ultimately failing to cohere. At once ancient and modern, de Chirico’s deserted streets and squares were invented in Italy (by way of Arnold Böcklin and Max Klinger). Most were painted in Paris, however, where his sensibility expanded in response to the city that guidebooks of the period described as a theater of progress haunted by historical ghosts and that Freud compared to a Sphinx “who gobbles up every foreigner unable to solve her riddles.”¹⁴¹

Train stations, those monuments to arrival and departure, were, for de Chirico, virtually emblematic of his experience as a *tourist-flâneur*. The old Gare Montparnasse, for example, was erected during the Second Republic, but its spare design, with classical elements applied to the structure of a two-tiered shed, gave it a timeless quality. The site’s history in 1914 is largely uneventful, but for one detail. Following excavation for the installation of a tramway, the place de Rennes, outside the station, was newly planted. In a brief item for *Paris-Journal* on May 25, a journalist—probably Apollinaire—remarked that municipal

7.161 (opposite)
Giorgio de Chirico
(1888–1978)
Gare Montparnasse
(*The Melancholy of*
Departure), 1914
Oil on canvas,
55 1/8 x 72 5/8 in.
(140 x 184.5 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; James
Thrall Soby bequest

gardeners had thereby ruined the square for de Chirico, who had believed that the Gare Montparnasse was adornment enough.¹⁴² No episode in the life of Paris is too trivial to be without reverberation in the soul of at least one poet. "Modernity, that great mystery,

dwells everywhere in Paris," de Chirico would later write, on returning to the city after World War I. "You find it again at every streetcorner, coupled with what once was and pregnant with what will be."¹⁴³ Between the old and the new, lies the melancholy of departure.





BONS
DE MOINE
A
5 ANS

ENGHIEN LES
BAINS

A 11 KILOMETRES

THERMAL CASINO HOTEL

CYRANO

Champagne MASSE Champagne

TABAC

La
BIERE Slavia

BRASSERIE

La Slavia



(pages 1252-1253)
 Edouard Boubat
 (b. 1923)
 Place Blanche,
 1956

Elliott Erwitt (b. 1928)
 Young people in a
 dimly lit club,
 1959



Marcel Bovis
(1904-1997)
In La Chapelle, 1937



Edouard Boubat
(b. 1923)

Quai du Louvre,
1952



François Le Diascorn
(b. 1947)

Place des Vosges, 1957





(opposite)
 François Le Diascorn
 (b. 1947)
 Escalier Maurice Utrillo,
 Montmartre, 1985

Willy Ronis
 (b. 1910)
 Ménilmontant,
 1947







8.2

Raoul Dufy (1877–1953)

Paris, tapestry ordered by Marie Cuttoli (1879–1973); one of ten designs on the theme of Paris, c. 1934–37

Aubusson tapestry, 76 x 61 in. (195 x 155 cm)

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou

In truth it is here that our nation, the most diverse in Europe, has been forged and reforged in the fire of the most lively and opposed minds, as though through the heat of their combination: this is the great, appropriate, and glorious function of Paris. It is the true head of France, where she draws together her most acute means of perception and reaction. Through its beauty and clarity, it gives France a countenance on which, at specific moments, the entire intelligence of the country comes to shine.

When our people are in the grip of strong emotions, blood rises to this forehead and the overpowering sense of France lights it up.

To think of Paris? The more one considers the matter, the more one feels oneself to be, on the contrary, thought by PARIS.

— PAUL VALÉRY, preface to *LA VILLE DE PARIS*, 1937



8.3

Juan Gris (1887–1927)
*Place Ravignan, or
 Still Life in Front of
 an Open Window, 1915*
 Oil on canvas, 45¹³/₁₆ x
 35 in. (116.5 x 89 cm)
 Philadelphia Museum of
 Art; Louise and Walter
 Arensberg Collection

FROM WAR TO WAR

Montmartre song is sometimes dangerous but never perverse. It runs like a little flame from day to day, from century to century. . . . We saw it shine for the last time but one, in August 1914. Montmartre, departure station for the infantry of Nancy, Toul, Saint-Nicolas-de-Port, gathered its offspring in the bars of the rue Lepic, the rue des Abbesses, the rue de Ravignan, the rue Tholozé. Painters, poets, journalists, plumbers, typesetters, and others responded to the call to arms. The Moulin Rouge had sizzled through the night. Behind the fences at Pantin, the long convoys of black wagons carried off to the east the best part of Paris song.

PIERRE MAC ORLAN, 1937¹

In his novel *Le Quai des brumes* (1927, *The misty quay*) Pierre Mac Orlan drew a poignant portrait of the lost bohemian world of prewar Paris and the brash new society of the 1920s. The French drifter Jean Rabe and the German painter Michel Kraus are both dead. Only Nelly, the girl whose path crossed theirs one night before the war at the *Lapin Agile* in Montmartre, has survived and prospered: “Queen of the dance hall: like a goddess of the street, but the street enriched by the crazy prodigalities of all those who escaped the massacre.”² The war—in which 1.3 million Frenchmen lost their lives—tested the nation and its institutions almost to the breaking point. They emerged from it victorious but also vulnerable; this duality would be central to the social and political history of the country over the next twenty-five years. As the political capital, the spiritual heart of the Republic, the industrial center, and the overwhelmingly dominant force in the intellectual and artistic life of France, Paris was the key site where this history was played out. In 1914, after a last-ditch battle within thirty miles of Notre-Dame, the city was saved. In 1940 it fell, and Adolf Hitler himself came to inspect his conquest. Between these two contrasting moments of heroism and abjection, Paris experienced one of its greatest periods of worldwide influence as an artistic center.

For the American writer Janet Flanner and her expatriate friends, in the early 1920s “Paris was still yesterday.”³ Drawn to the city as the intellectual heart of Europe and bolstered by a highly advantageous exchange rate, they were charmed by the old buildings of the *Ile de la Cité*, the *Ile Saint-Louis*, and the Latin Quarter, and by the patterns of urban life—its trades,

customs, food, and entertainment—that they found there. Continuity, a sense of the past informing the present and of the rich legacy of French culture, was an important feature of Parisian intellectual and artistic life in this period. But modernity, innovation and change in all aspects of life, was equally important. The resident American writers, whose network included Sylvia Beach’s bookshop *Shakespeare and Company* in the rue de l’Odéon and Gertrude Stein and Alice Toklas’s salon in the rue de Fleurus nearby, not only savored the historical flavor of the Left Bank but also engaged in the promotion and development of experimental modernist art, as they found it practiced on the Parisian scene and sustained by an unrivaled infrastructure of publishers, dealers, and patrons. Throughout the 1920s Paris was “swinging”: the new ideas developed there in art, design, literature, and fashion were noted and imitated throughout the Western world. The economic crisis of the 1930s hit the city’s art community, but its prestige and significance as a center for creative activity were, if anything, increased by the international Depression. However, by middecade the framework supporting this community—the traditions and institutions of the Third Republic—was itself under severe strain. It did not survive the outbreak and loss of another war with Germany. In 1940 Paris entered a period of unprecedented intellectual and artistic censorship, when a residual hatred of modernism and its practitioners, which had previously been checked, was briefly allowed full rein. When the city entered the post-war era, its artistic culture was scarred by the struggles of these years and also seriously challenged for the first time by another metropolitan center, New York.

THE VISUAL ARTS IN WARTIME PARIS



There were two fronts, the war front and then in Paris there was what might be called the Montparnasse front. . . . I was on the way toward what seemed to me the intense life—toward Picasso, toward Modigliani, toward Satie.

— JEAN COCTEAU, 1958⁴

“On the 2nd of August I took Braque and Derain to the station at Avignon. I’ve never seen them again.”⁵ In this characteristically pithy remark (made many years later), Picasso was signaling the decisive impact that the war had on the Parisian art community and, specifically, the gulf that separated those who became combatants from those who did not. The former were exposed to an experience that, if they survived, usually affected their attitudes profoundly; the latter were left to pursue their work in an environment that initially had little use for them and that was sometimes overtly hostile. In Picasso’s case

the difficulties were psychological; he was not short of money but he sometimes felt isolated, with his German dealer Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler in exile in Switzerland and most of his friends mobilized, including his old intimate and ally Guillaume Apollinaire, who had volunteered in the artillery (FIG. 8.5). For others, like Picasso’s compatriot Juan Gris, the absence of Kahnweiler and other potential patrons posed severe financial problems. Difficult modern art, made by foreigners, was not to the taste of many in Paris during the early years of the war.

Most private galleries remained closed in the autumn of 1914; there was no Salon d’Automne, and the Salon

organizations decided to suspend exhibitions for the duration of the war. This policy became problematic once it was evident that the conflict was going to be prolonged. From 1915 onward, galleries began to renew their activity, and group exhibitions—"salonnets," as the critic Louis Vauxcelles called them—reflecting a wide range of artistic positions were organized in response to the need of artists, both civilian and mobilized, to show their work. In 1916 the officially sponsored Salon des Armées brought together twenty-five hundred works made by artists in the field. The same year the so-called Salon d'Antin in the Galerie Barbazanges put on an exhibition, *L'Art moderne en France*, which, on a far smaller scale, asserted the vitality of avant-garde art in Paris despite the circumstances.

Soon after the war began, the government took steps to obtain an artistic record of events. Initially it relied largely on the established Société des Peintres Militaires, presided over by Francis Flameng. However, in 1917 and 1918 the newly established Missions aux Armées employed a wider range of artists, including Pierre Bonnard. It was soon realized that traditional military painting, focused on dramatic, decisive combat, had little relevance to this conflict. Battles were now conducted by batteries of hugely powerful guns, miles apart, pulverizing the landscape, and by soldiers cowering in trenches or charging like automatons across barren strips of landscape. The reality of battle was almost impossible to represent, particularly with any grandeur, as the critic Robert de La Sizeranne noted: "The modern 'battle' offers much to writers, psychologists, poets, dramatists, moralists, something, perhaps, for musicians; it offers nothing to artists."⁶ Consequently, the typical representation of the war, as seen in Parisian exhibitions or the pages of *L'Illustration*, was not of combat itself but of what preceded and followed it—life in the trenches, the movement of troops, ruins. Both commissioned artists like Flameng (FIG. 8.4) and ordinary soldier-painters tended to eschew the worst horrors of the front. This self-censorship generated what could be termed the official art of the war, which evaded the most unpalatable, and consequently dangerous, aspects of the truth.

One of the signs of the revival of the art scene in Paris in early 1916 was a one-man exhibition by the Italian artist (still resident in Paris) Gino Severini: *Ière Exposition futuriste d'art plastique de la guerre* (The

first Futurist exhibition of the plastic art of war).⁷ This artistic celebration of the war by an avant-garde painter was understandable in view of Severini's Futurist affiliations, but it was anomalous. Work by other Paris-based artists who were neither combatants nor contracted to the French war department, particularly those who were not French, was more often characterized by an absence of the war as theme. Although Paris was close to the front, noncombatant artists had no direct access to the grim realities of the battlefields, and generally neither their artistic positions nor their personal beliefs inclined them to treat the theme symbolically. In fact, Severini



8.4 (opposite)
F. Flameng (1856–1923)
Gathering up the Dead,
September 24, 1915, 1915
Watercolor and gouache
on paper, 11⁷/₈ x 17³/₄ in.
(30 x 45 cm)
Musée de l'Armée

8.5 (above)
Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)
*Portrait of Guillaume
Apollinaire with Bandaged
Head*, 1916
Pencil on paper, 11¹¹/₁₆ x 8¹³/₁₆ in.
(29.7 x 22.5 cm)
Musée Picasso



himself had dropped this subject matter by 1916; he engaged instead with Cubism, while also exploring the possibility of a return to tradition in the form of classical figuration. He exhibited both kinds of work in July 1916 at the exhibition *L'Art moderne en France*, where he showed a maternity scene and a number of still lifes.

This exhibition was organized by the poet and critic André Salmon with the help of the couturier Paul Poiret. Salmon's aim was to demonstrate the continuing vitality of the Parisian art community and to give artists, many of whom were living in extremely difficult circumstances, hope of finding a market for their work. The show, which included 166 pieces by fifty-one artists, was uneven, but it offered a major survey of recent art of a kind that no other venue had undertaken and at least one outstanding painting, *Les Femmes d'Alger* (O.K. 7.91)—the first time this work had been seen in public.⁸ In securing work by Picasso and Matisse, Salmon placed his selection under the aegis of the acknowledged leaders of the modern art movement in Paris. Matisse and Picasso also represented two categories of artist that postwar critics would often place in opposition to each other, the Frenchman and the foreigner. Another representative of the first category in this exhibition was André Derain, who was seen by some in the interwar years as the savior of the French school. The show's many foreign artists included the Pole Moïse Kisling, a great friend of Salmon's, who showed five paintings, and the Italian Amedeo Modigliani, who exhibited three portraits. These two artists were key figures in the "School of Paris"—a term coined about this time to describe the eclectic production by foreign artists in the city.

The contemporary strand of art practice that was least represented in *L'Art moderne en France* was Cubism. Fernand Léger had three paintings in the exhibition, but there was no work by Georges Braque or Gris and only the *Femmes d'Alger* by Picasso. It seems that the dealer Léonce Rosenberg was responsible for this. The gap was important, since the period 1916–17 was marked by an influential attempt to reassert the significance of Cubism and to counter the prejudice that it was at best irrelevant and at worst tainted by boche (German) values. Rosenberg—currently serving in the army—provided the material basis for this pro-Cubist campaign. Its the-

oretical and critical argument was largely the work of the poet Pierre Reverdy, who founded the review *Nord-Sud* (with Rosenberg's help) in 1917. In a series of articles, beginning with "Sur le cubisme" in the first issue, Reverdy articulated a view of modern art, influenced by the Symbolist poet Stéphane Mallarmé's views on language, as a practice that sought to generate aesthetic emotion through the original but disciplined exploitation of its specific means of expression, freed from narrative, anecdote, or imitation: "Because to imitate the best is in fact to create the least, we should favor an art that takes from life only those elements of reality that are necessary to it and that, using these elements and new, purely artistic means, achieves, copying nothing and imitating nothing, the creation of a work of art for its own sake. This work should have its own reality, its artistic usefulness, its independent life and will evoke nothing other than itself."⁹

Reverdy was encouraged in his efforts by the work and ideas of Gris, who had maintained his commitment to the difficulties of Cubist representation throughout these war years (initially in some isolation) and had indeed refined and consolidated his practice during this period. Gris's 1915 painting *Place Ravignan* (FIG. 8.3) is, in its way, a powerful evocation of a specific location—the small square at the heart of Montmartre where he lived and worked. But the abstract rhythmic construction of the painting, from the pale blue and black elements in the center out to the patterned bands at the periphery, with its strong interlocking diagonals and abrupt shifts of viewpoint and color, establishes exactly the kind of formal order and poetic transformation of the subject that Reverdy was to call for. In paintings of 1916 and 1917 Gris further developed a formal vocabulary of flat colored shapes as the armature of his paintings, given a figurative content through context and the presence of simple iconic details. In retrospect, he felt that he had finally achieved the transition from an analytic to a synthetic method of pictorial composition at this time.

Gris's thoughtfulness and dedication had impressed Matisse earlier, when they met in Collioure in the south of France during the autumn of 1914. Indeed, some of Matisse's paintings of 1914–16 may reflect the impact of their discussions. *The Piano Lesson* (FIG. 8.6), for example—a picture of his son Pierre at home in the Parisian suburb of Issy-les-Moulineaux—presents the Matisian

8.6 (opposite)
Henri Matisse (1869–1954)
The Piano Lesson,
late summer 1916
Oil on canvas,
96½ x 83⅛ in.
(245.1 x 212.7 cm)
The Museum of
Modern Art, New York;
Mrs. Simon Guggenheim
Fund



8.7

Georges Braque
(1882–1963)

The Musician, 1917–18

Oil on canvas,
87 ¼ x 44 ½ in.
(221.5 x 113 cm)

Kunstmuseum Basel

theme of aesthetic self-absorption, using a sparse abstract style that has some affinities with Gris's work. Through his reputation and example, Gris became a key figure among a small group of mostly foreign artists, including Jacques Lipchitz, Jean Metzinger, Diego Rivera, and Gino Severini, who emerged in 1916–17 as the proponents of a disciplined continuation of the Cubist style. Rivera's *Zapata Landscape: The Guerilla* (Museo Nacional de Arte, Mexico City), with its segmented landscape, dark patterns, and textured wood,

shows traces of Gris's influence as well as that of Picasso. Lipchitz adapted Gris's constructive principles into sculpture.

By the end of 1917 all of these artists were selling their work to Léonce Rosenberg. His financial backing, allied to a missionary zeal in promoting the style, was a powerful incentive to artists, and this revived Cubist movement acquired considerable momentum within the art community in Paris. But it also encountered problems. Rosenberg bought some of Picasso's work but



8.8

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

The American Manager
in the ballet *Parade*
by Erik Satie and Jean
Cocteau, in a costume
reconstructed for a
1964 production at the
Théâtre Royal de la
Monnaie, Brussels



8.9

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Curtain for the ballet
Parade by Erik Satie and
Jean Cocteau, 1917

Glue-paint on canvas,
32 ft. 9¼ in. x 56 ft. 7⅞ in.
(10 x 17.3 m)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre Georges
Pompidou





8.10

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

The Card Game, 1917

Oil on canvas,

50 3/4 x 76 in.

(129 x 193 cm)

Kröller-Müller Museum,
Otterlo, Netherlands

failed to secure exclusive rights to it. Picasso, although he probably did admire Gris's paintings, had little time for the new recruits, whom he wickedly dismissed as his "pique-assiettes" (parasites). When, encouraged by Rosenberg, some of them condemned the frivolity of Serge Fera's sets for his play *Les Mamelles de Tiresias*, Apollinaire described the group as inspired by "an idiotic notion of stupid commerce."¹⁰ There were also disagreements within the circle itself. In March 1917, after Rosenberg had hosted a banquet at the elegant restaurant Lapérouse, the group repaired to André Lhote's studio for a party. Late in the evening Reverdy, a man of passionate and deeply held convictions, while expounding his ideas on art let slip that he too saw some of these artists as mere hangers-on. Max Jacob described the scene vividly to the couturier Jacques Doucet: "Mister Ribéra [Diego Rivera] took offense and struck him. . . . The young and ardent theoretician of Cubism . . . threw himself on the perpetrator of this insult and both of them forgot the present, those present and precedences. . . . This is the most grave event of

the season. We shall have to take up positions."¹¹

Picasso was a key figure in another event that signaled the revival of cultural activity in Paris at this time: the presentation in May 1917 of the ballet *Parade*, with music by Erik Satie and libretto by Jean Cocteau, by Sergey Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. Picasso's sets and costumes asserted playfulness and artifice as key aspects of his calling. The managers' costumes (FIG. 8.8) were witty adaptations of collage to a theatrical role; the curtain (FIG. 8.9), representing commedia dell'arte characters in a style reminiscent of his Rose period of 1905–6 (see FIG. 7.91), bore witness to Picasso's belief that painting was a matter of personal style that could not be contained by a set of collective rules. From that point on, while continuing to produce Cubist paintings, Picasso also made works in a figurative mode with classical connotations. This characteristically individualist move disconcerted some members of the art community but helped him win a new clientele in fashionable Parisian society.

Artists at the front found news of these developments worrying. "Behind my back, the artistic life, my

artistic life, is starting up again. They've all wangled it, all of them," Léger wrote to his friend Louis Poughon early in 1916.¹² Even for those in the military's new artists' section, the *Camoufleurs*, it was difficult to find time and space to do any work, and those who had been exponents of avant-garde styles, like Léger himself, had more problems than most in relating their artistic positions to the terrifying reality of the war zone. In his 1916–17 notebooks André Mare, for example, adapted a geometric Cubist style to record life at the front.¹³ This may have reflected a belief that such a mode of expression was suited to the impersonality and fragmented character of war experience, but it may also betray an anxious desire to keep up with trends in Paris. Even among modernists the most prevalent kind of art from the front illustrated the banality of the soldier's lot, whereas in Paris modern art seemed to be moving toward either highly abstract impersonal experimentation or hedonistic fantasy.

Braque and Léger responded in characteristically different ways to the challenge of returning to the art world from the army. Having been seriously wounded (as Apollinaire was) in 1916, Braque was welcomed back to the Parisian scene at an artists' banquet in January 1917. This apparently very gay event was held in the Montparnasse studio of the Russian painter Marie Wassilief and was sponsored by, among others, Apollinaire, Gris, Matisse, and Picasso. Slowly, Braque went back to work (FIG. 8.7), adopting a style close to the pondered, restrained compositions favored by Gris. Braque's affinity with the wartime Cubist circle—who acknowledged him as a mentor—was demonstrated by his "Pensées et réflexions sur la peinture" (Thoughts and reflections on painting), published in *Nord-Sud* in December 1917. Braque had done very little painting in the army, and his experiences as a soldier had no overt presence in or influence on his work—he buried them.

Léger, on the other hand, who was ill during much of 1917 and finally left the army in 1918, acknowledged the war as a key influence. His own survival led him to make paintings that celebrated the vital, dynamic life of the city. He also produced a major work that did dramatically apply modernist formal devices to the depiction of life at the front—*The Card Game* (FIG. 8.10). Although this image can be read as a rendering of the

dehumanizing, mechanized character of the war, it is fundamentally a modernist version of what became a universal symbol of the French war experience, the image of the "poilu," or common soldier. "We all know him. . . . The thoughtful veteran, tenacious, tough: from the factory and above all the fields who defends the land with all the determination that he applied to cultivating it; heroic simply without slogans, almost silent, philosophical in his own way, somewhat fatalist, serving his ideal without defining it, knowing of the fine points of the job, aware of the enemy's qualities, conscious

8.11

Marcel Gromaire
(1892–1971)

War, 1925

Oil on canvas,
51 1/16 x 38 3/4 in.
(130 x 98.5 cm)

Musée d'Art Moderne de
la Ville de Paris





8.12

Henri Bouchard
(1875–1960)

*Monument to the
Unknown Heroes,
Anonymous Martyrs
for France, 1920*

Stone
The Panthéon

of his own strength—that is ‘the Poilu.’”¹⁴ In 1925 another ex-soldier, Marcel Gromaire, painted his own homage to the common soldier in his characteristically somber, stylized mode of realism (FIG. 8.11). The poilu here is a stern worker-hero virtually fused with the terrain he is defending. As a reminder of the sacrifice made for the nation, *War*, which was one of the most noted exhibits at that year’s Salon des Indépendants, could be read politically.

By 1925 this kind of express reference to the war was unusual in modern painting, whatever underlying influence the war still exerted on the attitudes of many artists and critics. However, the war did remain explicit and ever-present in one particular genre—the war memorial. A national law of October 1919 provided a small subsidy to communes for the erection of memorials, and in the early 1920s thousands were built throughout the country. Like the ceremony of Armistice Day that focused on them, they were less celebrations of victory than a collective homage to the dead, and a figure of the poilu was very often incorporated into them. In Paris, the arrondissements had individual memorials. So did many institutions, including the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, whose monument is guarded by a typical representation of a vigilant and resolute soldier. Henri Bouchard’s national memorial in the Panthéon (FIG. 8.12) equates the fallen poilu with a medieval knight. The Arc de Triomphe (see FIG. 5.1), the product of an era with a very different experience of war, was symbolically transformed by the incorporation of a tomb to the Unknown Soldier—a poignant and far from vainglorious addition.

Nearby, on the Champs-Élysées, a statue of the French wartime premier Georges Clemenceau, “the Tiger,” was erected after his death in 1929 (FIG. 8.13). Clemenceau epitomized the determination and national pride that had led to final victory, as well as the convergence of old political antinomies in the common struggle against Germany. A discourse of national unity (which in fact favored largely conservative political forces) was a major feature of the ideological climate of the war period and beyond, which also affected the production and interpretation of the visual arts.¹⁵ Clemenceau was directly associated with one particular example of this: he had facilitated the coming together of the state and his old friend Claude Monet in the

artist’s gift to the nation of his wall-size *Clouds* (see gatefold, FIG. 8.1, p. 1260), installed in the Orangerie in the Tuileries gardens. Monet was still engaged on these paintings at his death in 1926 (the rooms were not opened until the following year), and the concept evolved directly from his work in Giverny at the turn of the century, but the project had been specifically conceived during the war. On November 12, 1918, he wrote to Clemenceau: “Dear great friend, I am on the point of completing two decorative panels that I wish to sign on the day of Victory, and I am approaching you to ask you to offer them to the state on my behalf. It is not much but it is the only way I have of participating in the Victory.”¹⁶ Monet had painted during the war with a sense of guilt, as a way of escaping the horror of events. His obsessive engagement with “little research into forms and colors”¹⁷ could now, finally and conclusively, be identified with official French culture. Both the sublimation of the war and the celebration of the modern tradition in art were symptomatic of Paris in the postwar era.



8.13
François Cogné
(1876–1952)
Georges Clemenceau,
1929
Bronze
Place Clemenceau,
Champs-Élysées

THE INTERNATIONAL EXPOSITIONS
OF 1925 AND 1937



8.14
The Porte d'Orsay,
Exposition Internationale
des Arts Décoratifs
et Industriels Modernes,
1925

Writing in 1937 in a survey of the visual arts in Paris, Fernand Léger characterized art and life in the postwar years as an intense celebration of color, in which economic struggle replaced the terrible violence of the front: “The war was dull and camouflaged. . . . Modern life is brilliant and brutal.”¹⁸ In 1925 and 1937 the center of Paris was the stage for two international expositions of art and design—both featuring Léger’s work—that illustrated, in different ways, the features of postwar culture in the city that prompted this judgment—its self-conscious engagement with the modern, its energy and commercialism, and its underlying febrility and potential for conflict. The Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes (FIGS. 8.14 and 8.15) and the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne (1937) each occupied

the central site on either side of the bridge — the Pont Alexandre III — that had been constructed for the Exposition Universelle of 1900. (In 1937, as in 1889 and 1900, the fair also continued along both sides of the Seine to the Champ-de-Mars and beyond.)

Like their predecessors, these exhibitions were conceived as economic catalysts, foci of national prestige, and popular attractions. The 1937 fair was attended by over 30 million people (vying with 1889 if not 1900, which had attracted over 50 million). Visitors came for instruction but also for entertainment. In 1937 this was provided by, among other things, electric cars, a water organ, and dramatic illuminated displays at night. The 1925 fair had fewer visitors (15 million). It was a smaller affair with a more specialized scope, but pleasure was even more dominant as a theme. This exhibition encapsulated a mood and embodied a style, labeled

8.15

Exposition Internationale
des Arts Décoratifs
et Industriels Modernes,
April–October 1925

Ground Plan

Musée des Arts
Décoratifs



8.16 (right)

Pierre Chareau (1883–1950)

Sketch of an Ambassador's Study, for the
Exposition Internationale des Arts
Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes, 1925

Gouache on cardboard, $15\frac{3}{16} \times 14\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(38.5 x 37.7 cm)

Musée des Arts Décoratifs



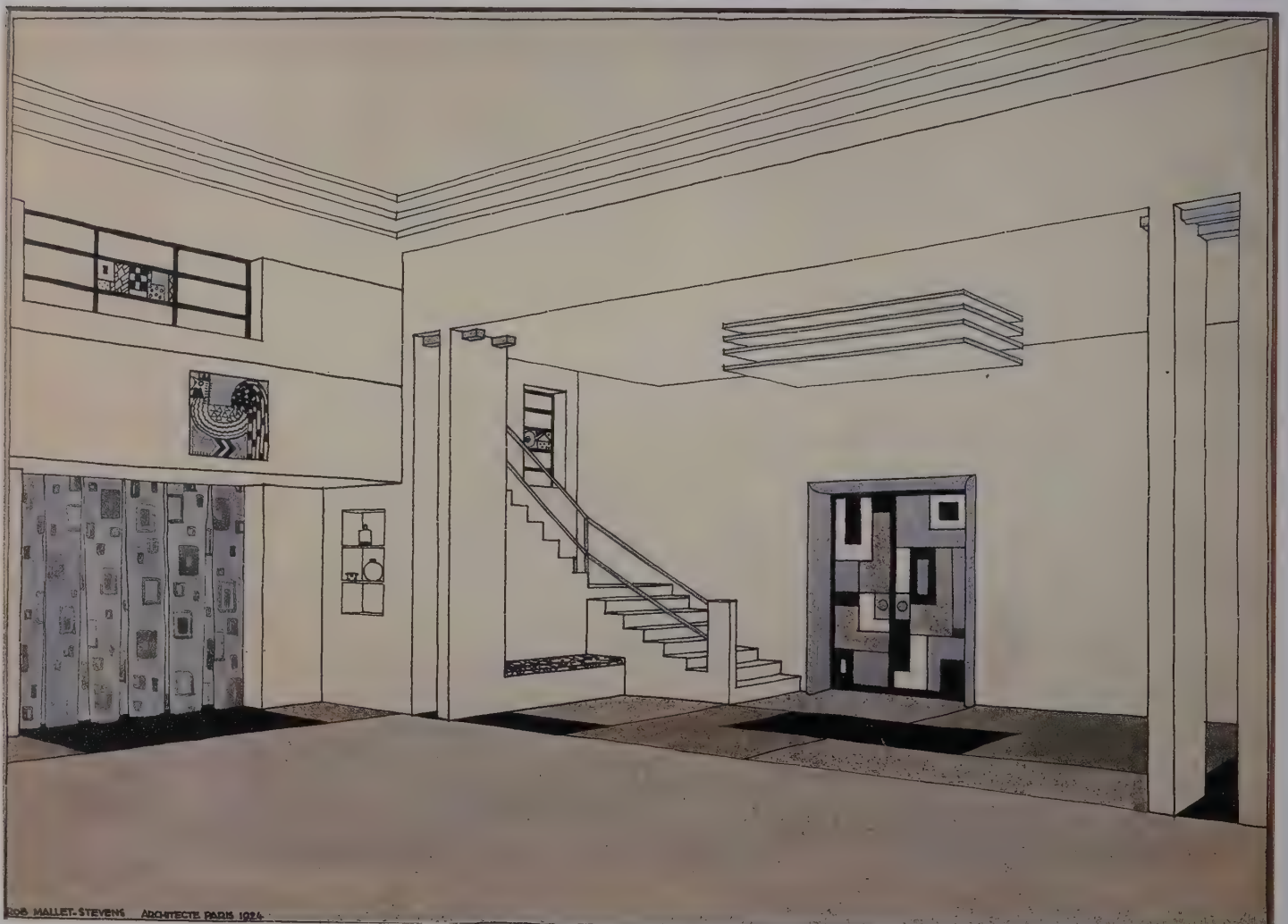
8.17 (below)

Robert Mallet-Stevens (1886–1945)

Project for an Embassy, 1924–25

Gouache on paper, $18\frac{1}{16} \times 24\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(48 x 63.2 cm)

Musée des Arts Décoratifs





Art Deco, that corresponded to a certain euphoria in the capital as France recovered from the war and Paris regained its role as world center of fashion and luxury. By contrast the 1937 exhibition, despite its official optimism and its success with the public, was clearly marked by the political and economic problems of the 1930s.¹⁹

The idea of hosting an international exhibition of the applied arts had first been proposed in 1911, triggered by a growing awareness that traditional French dominance in this field was threatened by foreign competition, above all from Germany. The war interrupted the project, and postwar financial and technical problems led to further postponements. The 1925 event, from which German participants were excluded, was an assertion of France's recovery and of the claim of its design industry to lead the world in terms of taste, quality, and innovation. The planning of the exhibition brought out differences of views and interest between industrial manufacturers and *artistes-décorateurs*, whose professional association had campaigned for the project. Even though the compromises over the type of display included dismayed some partisans of the latter, who complained about too many concessions to industrial and commer-

cial interests, the exhibition generally promoted their design values—craftsmanship over industrial production, luxury and refinement rather than utilitarian consumption. This emphasis did not preclude laying claim to modernity; indeed, a striking feature of the exhibition was the ability of key participants to integrate modern styling with established notions of quality. The radical and conservative versions of this achievement are exemplified on one hand by the contributions to the project for a French embassy by Pierre Chareau and Robert Mallet-Stevens and on the other by the *Hôtel d'un Collectionneur* (Home of a collector), by Ruhlmann et Cie.

By 1925 Mallet-Stevens had adapted his earlier Austrian-influenced style to a more Cubist-oriented character, with steep, angular planes and a predominance of flat surfaces. Two further commissions at the fair, the Pavillon du Tourisme and the garden, provided striking examples of this modern handling of architectural form. Mallet-Stevens's lobby for the embassy (FIG. 8.17) deployed it in the treatment of interior space and in the integration of architecture and decor. By commissioning Robert Delaunay, Henri Laurens, and Léger to provide wall decorations, he declared his engagement with the

8.18

Pierre Chareau
(1883–1950)

Armchair and bureau
for an ambassador's
study, 1925

Rosewood, mahogany, oak,
leather and steel, armchair:
29¹/₁₆ x 55 x 30¹/₁₆ in.
(76 x 140 x 77 cm)

Musée des Arts Décoratifs

artistic avant-garde—this proved controversial with the government sponsor, who demanded the removal of the paintings by Delaunay and Léger—while avoiding any fundamental challenge to established notions of the relationship between architecture and decoration or to the concept of hierarchy in building types. This was also the case with the other parts of the embassy project. Chareau's model for a library-study (FIGS. 8.16 and 8.18), which incorporated a relief by Jacques Lipchitz, was a typical exercise in discreet, stylized luxury. In contrast

to the Art Nouveau it displaced, this mode emphasized restraint over exuberance and the geometric over the organic, both in surface decoration and in overall organization, but it embodied a similar design ethos of generating a sense of physical and psychological warmth through use of varied fine materials and their careful integration within the whole.

The critic Waldemar George argued that the decision of Mallet-Stevens and his colleagues in the Société des Artistes Décorateurs to design and furnish an imaginary embassy was symptomatic of the elitism that pervaded the fair as a whole.²⁰ The Hôtel d'un Collectionneur (FIG. 8.19) certainly was explicit in its equation of taste with wealth and its celebration of the individual over the collective. The model environment created by Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann's team was dedicated to domestic leisure and to the heightening of its pleasures through a combination of excess and refinement—that is, an abundance of objects, materials, and forms handled with exquisite craftsmanship and organized into a coherent aesthetic whole. The oval music salon at the center of the building (FIG. 8.20) was crammed with different shapes and textures, from the elaborate chandeliers to the intricately patterned Gaudisson carpet, presided over by the statuesque figures in a large Jean Dupas painting; the whole was carefully orchestrated to provide a rich harmony of form, color, and texture, redolent of the past. Whereas Mallet-Stevens's modernity made use of stylistic devices related to Cubism and incorporated symbolic references to the clean, hard lines of industrial products, Ruhlmann's modern style took the form of an eclectic classicism that relied both symbolically and literally on the traditions of French design. The exhibition had been explicitly planned to highlight and promote the collaboration of creative designers with industrial manufacturers, but the leading exhibitors were those, like the Ruhlmann company, that traded on the cachet and the production values of small-scale, craft-oriented manufacture, not mass production.

Two other displays at the fair exemplified the participation of modern artists in the production of luxury commodities. Sonia Delaunay, who had begun making book bindings and textiles before the war, shared a boutique with a supplier of luxury accessories. And Raoul Dufy provided wall hangings for one of the three

8.19

Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann (1879–1933) & Cie and Pierre Patout (1879–1965), architects
Pavilion with sculpture by Alfred-Auguste Janniot (1889–1969), Hôtel du Collectionneur, 1925



8.20

Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann (1879–1933) & Cie and Pierre Patout (1879–1965), architects
Oval salon, Hôtel du Collectionneur, 1925





barges—called *Amours*, *Délices*, and *Orgues*—that the couturier Paul Poiret, in a typically flamboyant and extravagant gesture, had commissioned and moored on the Seine to display both his collections and design items from his studio, La Maison Martine. Dufy's hangings (FIG. 8.21) onboard *Orgues* (Organ) were celebrations of high-society life that, like the decors in Ruhlmann's Hôtel but with a lighter touch—Rococo rather than Empire—linked contemporary life and contemporary style to the social and artistic heritage of the French ruling classes.

Two exhibits stood out in opposition to the prevailing ethos of the fair. One was the Russian pavilion by Konstantin Melnikov, which gave the French public virtually its first glimpse of Soviet design. The other was the Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau (Pavilion of the new spirit) by Le Corbusier and his brother Pierre Jeanneret

(FIG. 8.22). Le Corbusier had written on the German reform movement in design and architecture as early as 1912. Since the end of the war he had used his buildings, his theoretical writing, and texts in the review *L'Esprit nouveau* (which he had founded with Amédée Ozenfant) to put forward a radical "industrial" conception of architecture similar to that of Walter Gropius and his colleagues at the Bauhaus. Buildings should integrate, formally and materially, the technological thrust of modern society. The Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau attacked the premises on which most of the surrounding displays were based; its program was "the rejection of decorative art as such . . . to illustrate how, by virtue of the selective principle (standardization applied to mass production), industry creates pure forms." The pavilion consisted of a model apartment that was presented as a standard unit, constructed out of

8.21

Raoul Dufy (1887–1953)

The Bridge Party at the Casino, 1925

Printed cotton canvas,
8 ft. 2⁷/₁₆ in. x 15 ft. 1¹/₁₆ in.
(2.5 x 4.6 m)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre Georges
Pompidou

8.22

Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret) (1887–1965), and
Pierre Jeanneret (1896–1967)
Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau, 1925



8.23

Le Corbusier (Charles-Edouard Jeanneret) (1887–1965), and
Pierre Jeanneret (1896–1967)
Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau, 1925
Interior showing salon and
balcony with painting at right
by Fernand Léger



industrial materials and designed to be integrated into a multiple block. The interior (FIG. 8.23) had built-in storage and was ascetically furnished with functional rather than decorative chairs and tables. Bare walls carried works of art by Le Corbusier himself and by Léger (FIG. 8.23), which were intended to reinforce the “machinist” message of the ensemble, “that a dwelling can be standardized to meet the needs of men whose lives are standardized.”²¹ In an annex to the pavilion, the architect also presented the Voisin Plan (named after Le Corbusier’s industrial sponsor), based on these rationalist and anti-individualist principles. It involved reinventing the center of Paris by ripping out the compressed, eclectic mix of buildings north of Notre-Dame and replacing them with standardized skyscrapers in parkland, dissected by a grid of roads (FIG. 8.24).

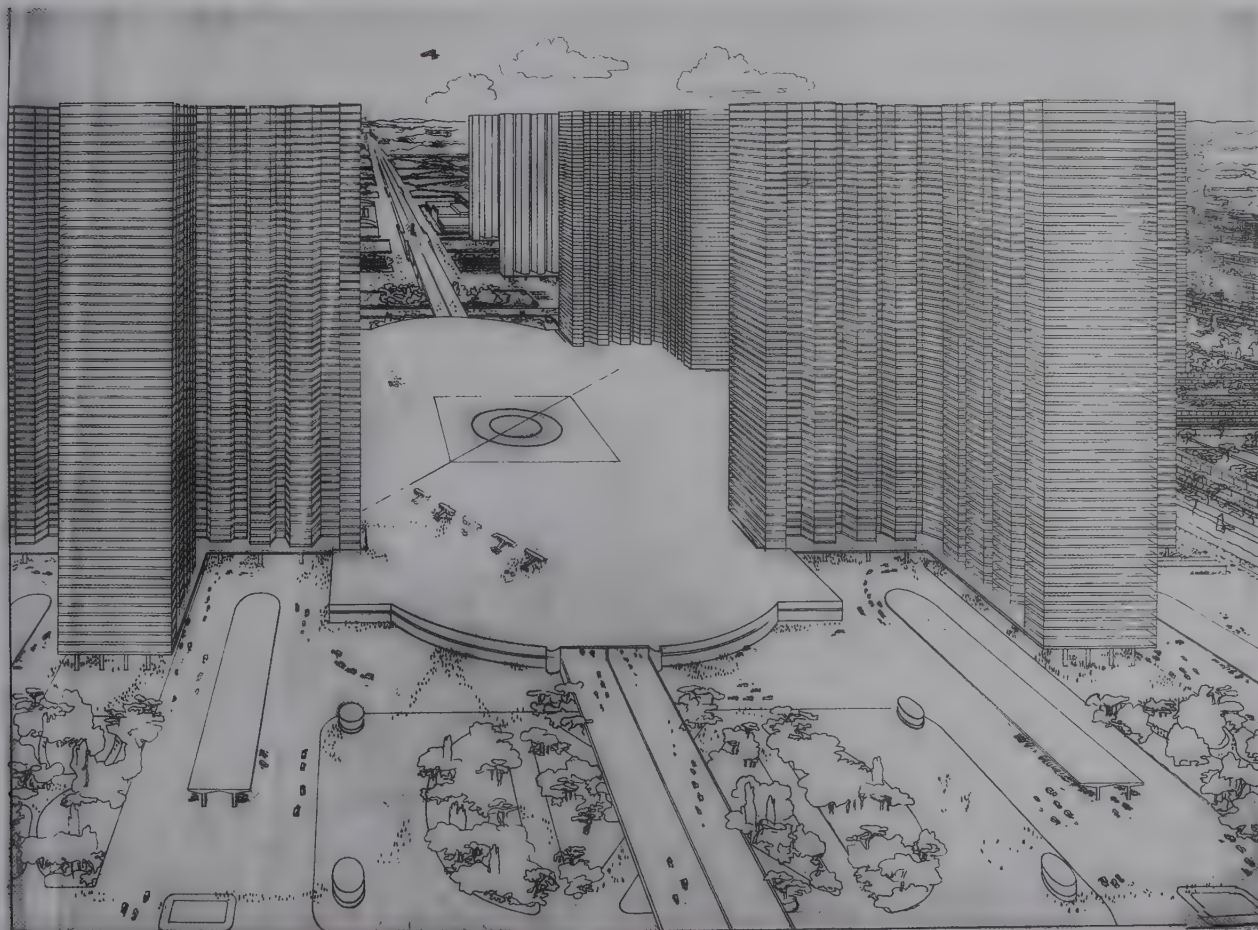
Le Corbusier’s project challenged the prevailing ethos of the 1925 exhibition, but certain aspects of the Pavillon de l’Esprit Nouveau did correspond to the

particular conditions of the mid-1920s. It engaged with the theme of reconstruction that had played a large part in political and economic discourse during the postwar years; its coupling of a modern aesthetic with the notion of social well-being was echoed elsewhere in the exhibition, if in less radical ways, and its commitment to progress was at least partly justified by the current state of the country. And this prototype serial apartment was in fact less a model for a mass-produced, democratic architecture whose realization lay in the future than the presentation of a set of architectural and aesthetic principles that in this period were applied chiefly to individual homes for a wealthy, self-consciously modern clientele.²²

If the dominant theme of the *Arts décoratifs* exposition was private consumption and the domestic interior, that of the 1937 fair (FIG. 8.26) was public, communal activity and the role of the state. In many respects the later exposition was a celebration of technological progress,

8.24

Le Corbusier
(Charles-Edouard
Jeanneret) (1887–1965)
The Voisin Plan, 1925



8.25

View of the Esplanade
du Trocadéro,
Exposition Internationale
des Arts et Techniques
dans la Vie Moderne,
1937



8.26

Ground plan,
Exposition Internationale
des Arts et Techniques
dans la Vie Moderne,
1937



but it also was inscribed with signs of the social and political conflicts of the era. Many of the French pavilions were influenced by the policies and slogans of the Popular Front, in power from May 1936 to June 1937, but certain areas of display, notably the Centre Régional and the Centre Colonial, carried conservative political connotations. National pavilions were far more prominent than in 1925, and in at least three cases they were employed for direct propaganda purposes.

On the principal axis of the exposition, at the foot of the Trocadéro garden, across the river from the Eiffel Tower, the German and Russian pavilions provided a theatrical confrontation between fascist and socialist culture (FIG. 8.25). Albert Speer's severe classical tower, crowned with a German eagle and flanked by a group of sturdy Aryan figures, was a convincing example of Nazi power architecture (FIG. 8.28). Across the way, the gaunt block of the Soviet building by Boris Iofan, crowned by two surging figures representing the alliance of industrial and agricultural workers in the new society, adapted some aspects of Soviet modernism to the now official Soviet Realist aesthetics (FIG. 8.30). Just beyond them, the Spanish pavilion by José-Luis Sert offered a disturbing, polemical reminder of the tragedy unfolding in the Spanish Republic—which enacted in reality the ideological conflict between Germany and the USSR and also constituted another troubling issue in contemporary French politics. In addition to Picasso's mural invoking *Guernica* (FIG. 8.29)—the ancient Basque town bombed by German aircraft that spring—the pavilion displayed other works by pro-Republican artists, including Joan Miró (FIG. 8.30), and an exhibition on the theme of contemporary life in Spain.

Elsewhere in the exposition the emphasis was on science and technology. One of the great successes was the Palais de la Découverte, a pedagogical display of scientific achievement in the Grand Palais. Other prominent pavilions were devoted to railways, airplanes, and electricity. An important feature of the overall French contribution was the extent to which it involved painters and sculptors. This was partly because the organizers had taken the opportunity, given the economic crisis, to use the exposition as a job-creation scheme for underemployed artists. In 1935–36 a massive program of commissions was launched for murals, sculpture, and fixed decorations jointly financed by the city and the



8.27

Boris Iofan (1891–1976),
architect

USSR Pavilion,
Exposition Internationale
des Arts et Techniques
dans la Vie Moderne,
1937



8.28

Albert Speer (1905–1981),
architect

German Pavilion,
Exposition Internationale
des Arts et Techniques
dans la Vie Moderne,
1937



8.29

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Guernica, 1936–37

Oil on canvas, 11 ft. 5¼ in. x 25 ft. 7⅞ in. (3.50 x 7.82 m)
Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid





8.30

Joan Miró (1893–1983)

Help Spain, 1937

Stencil, printed in color,
9 3/4 x 7 3/8 in.

(24.8 x 19.4 cm)

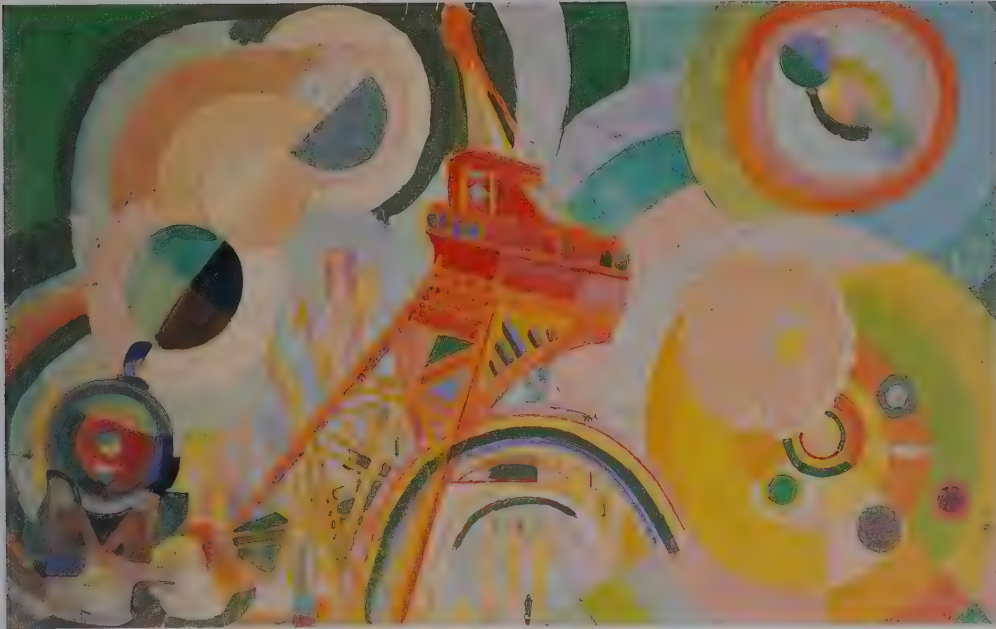
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; gift of
Pierre Matisse

state. These engaged an eclectic mix of artists, from the well-established to the avant-garde—the latter including, for example, Albert Gleizes, Léger, and Lipchitz. Sonia and Robert Delaunay were entrusted with several projects, notably in the railway and air pavilions. For many years they had entertained the ambition to work on a mural scale and to combine formal ideas originally developed before the war in the context of Cubism with the celebration of modern life on a grand, public scale. Now they had the chance to do so (FIGS. 8.31 and 8.32).

In 1925 Mallet-Stevens had incurred ministerial displeasure by commissioning a mural piece from Robert Delaunay. In 1937 Mallet-Stevens, like Delaunay, was one of the modernist establishment, whose neat, clever, and practical approach to design was appreciated by both his clients and the public. The pavilions of light, hygiene, and national solidarity that he conceived were well suited to the tempered modernism that was one of the leitmotifs of the exhibition. Le Corbusier, on the

other hand, was more controversial. After the city council (partner with the state in the organization and financing of the exposition) torpedoed a project to build a model apartment block, the architect, with the patronage of the socialist leader Léon Blum, secured a site to erect a temporary structure—the Pavillon des Temps Nouveaux (Pavilion of the new times). The interior contained a didactic display articulating Corbusier's social and architectural ideas, with a contribution by Léger in which he employed photomontage—a technique pioneered by German and Soviet artists in the 1920s.

The 1925 Art Deco exposition had consisted entirely of temporary structures. In 1937, as in 1889, 1900, and 1931 (the colonial fair at Vincennes), the exposition left a permanent mark on the city: the grand complex of buildings at the Trocadéro and to its east—the Palais de Chaillot, the Musée des Travaux Publics (Museum of public works, now occupied by the social



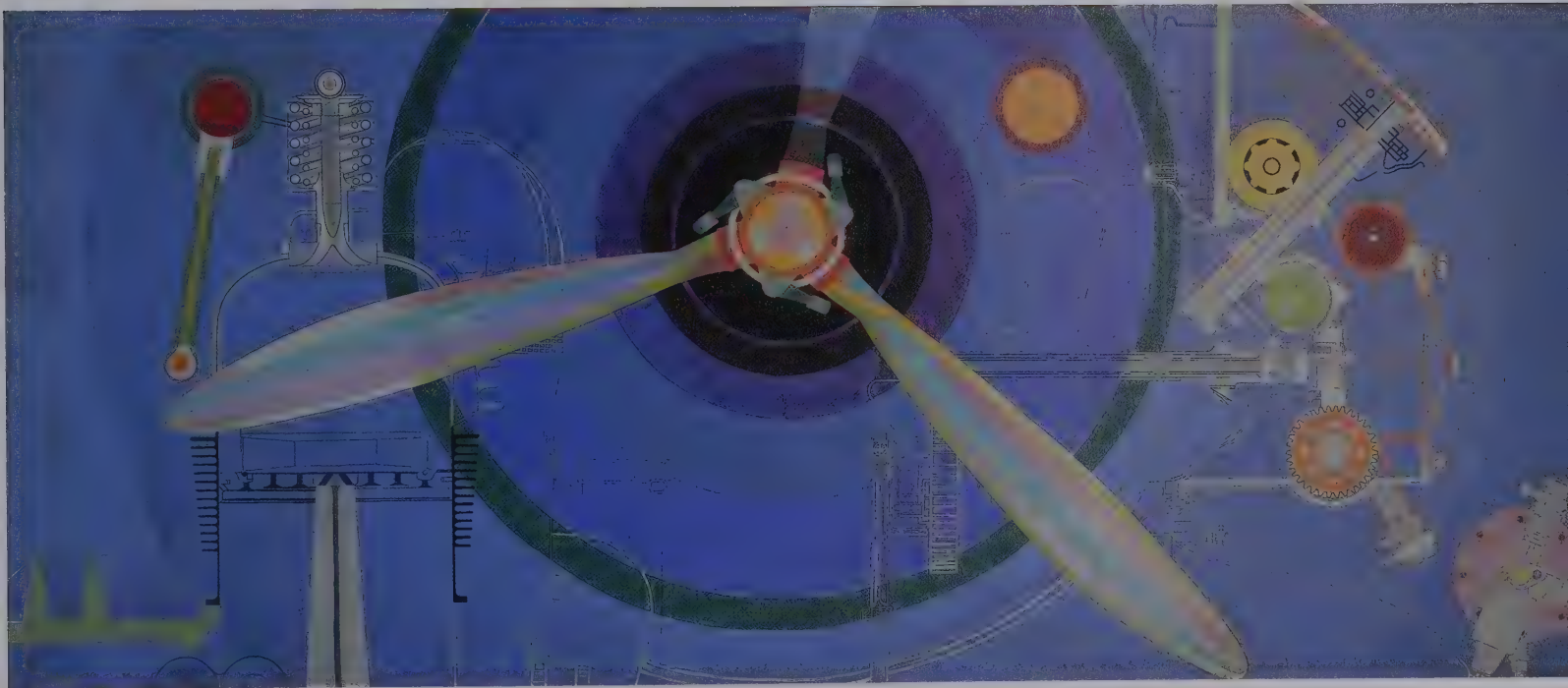
8.31

Robert Delaunay
(1885–1941)

Study for *Air, Fire and Water*, 1936

Gouache on paper, 18½ x 29¼ in.
(47 x 74.5 cm)

Private collection



8.32

Sonia Delaunay
(1885–1979)

Propeller, mural for the Pavillon de l'Air at the Exposition
Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne, 1937

Wall painting, c. 9 ft. 8 in. x 22 ft. 11 in. (c. 2.95 x 7.00 m)
Skissernas Museum, Lund, Sweden

8.33

Auguste Perret
(1874–1954)
Musée des Travaux
Publics (now Conseil
Economique et Social),
1936–46
Place d'Iena



8.34

Jacques Carlu
(1890–1976),
Louis-Hippolyte Boileau
(1878–1948),
Léon Azéma (1888–1966)
Palais de Chaillot,
1937
Place du Trocadéro



and economic council), and the paired art museums (the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris and the Site de Création Contemporaine) on the avenue Président Wilson. Only the smallest of these, the Musée des Travaux Publics (FIG. 8.33), was designed by an architect still considered a major figure—Auguste Perret, who produced an elegant essay in his signature material, reinforced concrete. From a present-day perspective, the history of these commissions might be seen as one of lost opportunities. Perret had originally been asked to design a new palace to replace the Trocadéro built for the Exposition Universelle of 1878, but his project was turned down and the scheme handed over to the more establishment team of Azemà, Boileau and Carlu, two of whom were laureates of the academic Prix de Rome. The competition for the two art museums included entries by Le Corbusier, Tony Garnier, and Mallet-Stevens but was won by a team whose design was characterized by a grand use of the classical orders, albeit in modern stripped form. Both the resulting monuments are firmly rooted in the cautious, historicist approach to modernity that characterized official culture of the period. In terms of then-prevailing architectural values, they were effective and elegant solutions to providing imposing public buildings dedicated to the arts; today they remain eloquent memorials to their time.

Throughout the interwar period the cultural life of Paris, possibly the richest and most varied in the world, continued to be pulled in different ways: toward ultra-modern universality, cosmopolitan eclecticism, and the reassertion, or reinvention, of national tradition. The two new art museums of the state and the city—fronted by an image of France by Antoine Bourdelle that had been conceived for a war memorial (FIG. 8.35) and decorated by Alfred Janniot in a mode inspired by Jean Goujon—reflect this diversity and some of the conflicts it contained. So did the pattern of art exhibitions in connection with the 1937 fair. The central event, housed in the new national museum's galleries, was a survey of masterpieces of French art from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The city council sponsored a concurrent survey of modern art in the Petit Palais that—although it explicitly recognized the foreign contribution to “independent art” by including the work of prominent figures resident in the city before

1925, such as Gris, Modigliani, and Picasso—chiefly highlighted the achievements of the modern French school. And a small exhibition in the Jeu de Paume offered a somewhat embarrassed recognition of the role that Paris now played as host, and refuge, to the international avant-garde.

8.35

Antoine Bourdelle
(1861–1929)

France, 1925, Bronze

64 1/8 x 13 x 7 1/2 in.

(163 x 33 x 19 cm)

Palais de Tokyo



PARIS AS AN ART CENTER BETWEEN THE WARS

The School of Paris exists. In the future art historians will be able to define its character and study the elements that make it up better than we can: but we can still affirm its existence and the magnetic force it exerts, attracting here artists from all over the world. Many reasons that have nothing to do with fine art contribute to the fact that Montparnasse is inhabited by men and women of all nationalities, not counting those who are a little vague on this point; nonetheless it is love of art, more than anything else, that brought them all to Paris.

ANDRÉ WARNOD, 1925²³

One reason the authorities felt impelled to take action for the relief of artists in 1937 was that there were enormous numbers of them in the city. The fact that many were of foreign origin was central to the polemical debate over the nature of modern art in Paris during the interwar period. Indeed, the concept of a School of Paris, which became current at

this time, was developed specifically to designate a type of art that had no specific national characteristics or even clear stylistic traits. It was the product of the engagement of a cosmopolitan mix of painters and sculptors with the artistic life and traditions of the city, which were built around the principle of artistic freedom and sustained by the most liberal, and the richest,



8.36

Brassaï (Gyula Halász)
(1899–1984)

Café Le Dôme, 1932

Silver-gelatin print
Private collection

art market in the world. From the end of the war until the economic crash of 1929, Paris experienced an art boom, fueled initially by inflation and subsequently by the spread of prosperity in the West. The art world was so frenetic that a common response to the harsh conditions after 1930 was to see them as a necessary purge, which only solid artistic talents would survive.²⁴ In some—but not all—cases, this reading was inflected by reactionary political views that were to become official policy under the Vichy regime of the 1940s.

Reverdy's review *Nord-Sud* was named after the metro line that runs from the Porte de Clignancourt to the Porte d'Orléans. Passing through the historical heart of the city—Chatelet, the Ile de la Cité, and the Latin Quarter—it linked Montmartre to Montparnasse: the two outlying districts that, as André Warnod put it in his book *Les Berceaux de la jeune peinture* of 1925, had served as "cradles" for modern art. While Montmartre was the home of many key figures in the Parisian avant-garde around 1905–14, Montparnasse became well established as a center for young artists before the war. As in the case of Montmartre, they were drawn there primarily by the availability of cheap studio space. A famous example of this, on the outer edge of the city, was the cluster of studios known as La Ruche (The beehive). These had been erected at the turn of the century by a sculptor, André Boucher, using buildings recuperated from the 1900 Exposition Universelle. Marc Chagall, Léger, Lipchitz, and Chaïm Soutine were among the young hopefuls who lodged there before 1914. Léon-Paul Fargue dated the establishment of Montparnasse as the new center of modern art to 1912, when Picasso moved south from the boulevard de Clichy to the avenue Raspail.²⁵

Certainly this ascendancy was evident in the postwar years. By then, Montmartre was a neighborhood living off its legend, with its center devoted to the ever-growing tourist trade; Montparnasse, while also thriving on the money (dollars in particular) spent in its bars and clubs by foreign visitors, retained a burgeoning population of artists and writers. Many of them were foreigners as well, particularly from the United States, Scandinavia, and eastern Europe. To accommodate them, more studios were built in the area south of the boulevard de Montparnasse, on both a modest and a grand scale. Between 1924 and 1927, for example, André Lurçat designed a small



complex for his brother Jean and some friends at the Villa Seurat, and a large studio-villa (FIG. 8.37) for the Guggenbühls on a nearby corner facing the Parc Montsouris. In 1922 Le Corbusier had designed a manifesto Purist studio-house for his associate Amédée Ozenfant in this quiet district on the southern edge of Montparnasse (see FIG. 8.87). Braque and Derain both settled there in new houses in 1927 and 1928—manifestations of the material rewards they were enjoying.

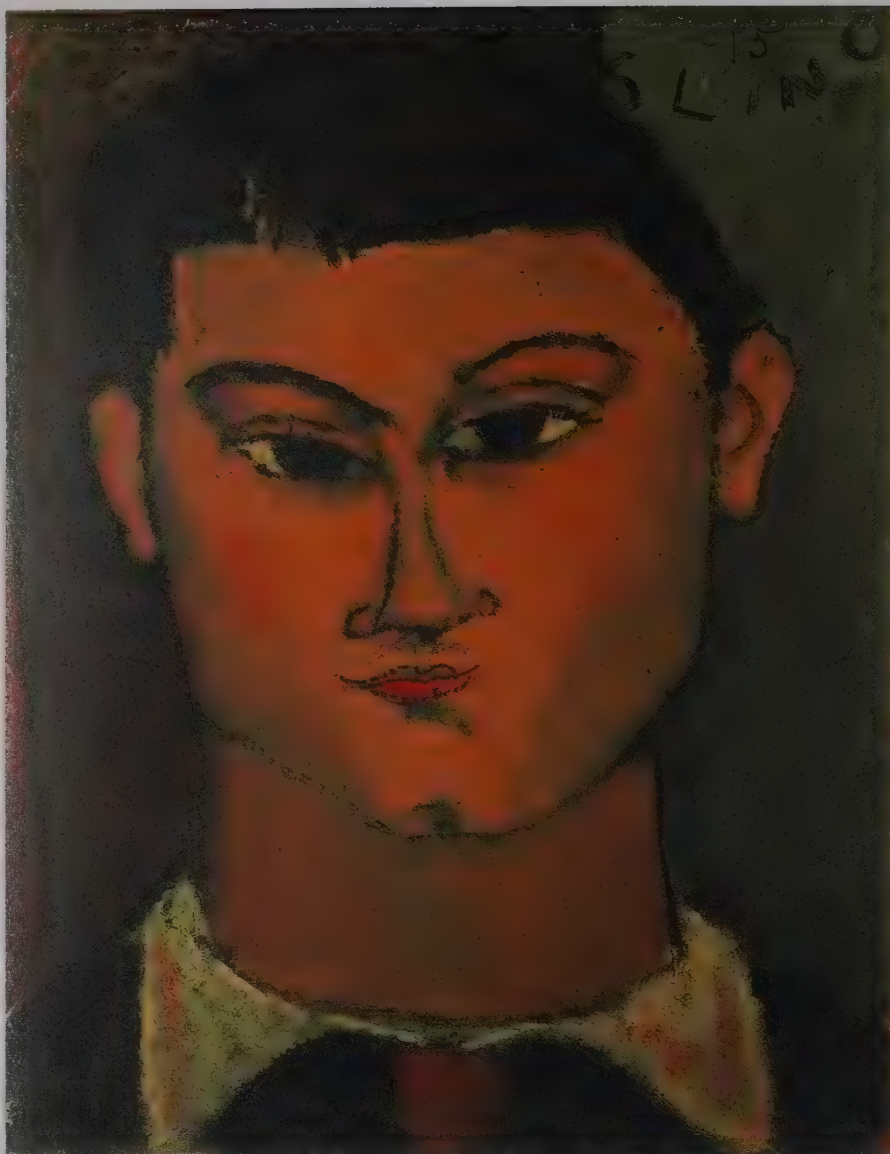
Cafés, sites of sociability and business as well as of refreshment, were an important feature of life in Montparnasse. The young German artists who gathered there before World War I were known as the "Dôme

8.37

André Lurçat
(1894–1970)

Maison Guggenbühl,
1927

Rue Nansouty



8.38

Amedeo Modigliani
(1884–1920)

*Portrait of Moïse
Kisling, 1916*

Oil on canvas,
31⁷/₈ x 18 in. (81 x 46 cm)
Musée d'Art Moderne,
Villeneuve d'Ascq, gift of
Geneviève and Jean
Masurel

circle” after the café they frequented in the heart of the quarter, on the carrefour Vavin (FIG. 8.36). La Rotonde, on the other side of the boulevard, was (at least until its sympathetic owner, Victor Libion, was forced to sell in 1920) the preferred meeting place for many members of the School of Paris and their sponsors, such as the Polish dealers Adolphe Basler and Léopold Zborowski. Memoirs of the period—including those of Ernest Hemingway, who had his first encounter with Paris in the early 1920s, and of Kiki, the exuberant model to Moïse Kisling, Foujita, and Man Ray (among others)—invariably dwell on café life. Kiki, in 1920, preferred La Rotonde: “I like bright lights and pictures on the wall. And besides . . . there’s always a nutty crowd.”²⁶ New cafés opened up in the 1920s, reflecting both the new affluence and the new mood in the neighborhood. The most dramatic embodiment of this was La Coupole, opened in 1927, with its American bar and vast dining

area decorated with modern art. “The enormous glass-plated fair,” Léon-Paul Fargue complained, “that spreads itself like a train on the pavement . . . this fresco of crayfish and lady diners . . . of unkempt bohemians and ‘business men’ that the hot wind of modernity blows into the 14th arrondissement every evening.”²⁷

The Parisian art community was structured principally by informal networks of personal friendship, nationality, and artistic affinity. The painter Kisling, for example (FIG. 8.38), was at the center of a wide circle of artists, many of whom were, like him, eastern European practitioners of an antiacademic, personalized figurative style. He had been close to Amedeo Modigliani while he was alive and had shared some of Soutine’s privations. But Kisling was also on good terms with artists of different background and persuasion, such as Juan Gris and André Derain. His friends included the French writers Pierre Mac Orlan (FIG. 8.39) and André Salmon, whose writing in this period elaborated on the myth of the modern bohemian. Kisling’s studio at 3 rue Joseph Bara in the heart of Montparnasse was, for this disparate group of Parisians, a point of focus and conviviality, where the modern “vie d’artiste” was lived to the full. “It was like that every day: mornings of work, afternoons constantly interrupted by endless visitors and in the evening excursions which lasted at least until dawn.”²⁸ Kisling and his friends were, in fact, reasonably prosperous during the post-World War I period. They constituted the elite of the art world; its “lower classes” were made up of students and a shifting cosmopolitan population of little-known aspiring artists. All tended to congregate in Montparnasse. Many of the students were enrolled at one of the private art schools that provided a useful source of income for several members of the modern art establishment, including Léger, who taught at the Académie Moderne on the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs during the 1920s.

Many of the foreign students were in Paris only temporarily or were not seeking to become professional painters or sculptors. Those who did hope to establish themselves in the city had to enter a highly competitive arena, with rich prizes for some and very precarious rewards for the majority. During this period the Parisian art market was in a transitional phase. At the turn of the century, promotional art dealers were already key players in the selection and marketing of modern art,

but the Salons still played an essential role in this process. After World War I it was increasingly the small gallery exhibitions that shaped the development of modern art and public perception of it. The key ambition of a young artist was to be taken up by a dealer and given a personal or small group show. Nonetheless, because they offered artists the opportunity to show their work and the public the possibility of gaining a broad impression of contemporary trends, the Salons continued to be important focal points of the artistic life of the city.

The most important Salons for those engaged with modern art remained the Salon des Indépendants, held in the spring, and the Salon d'Automne. In the interwar period both were held in the state-owned Grand Palais, off the Champs-Élysées—an indication of the semi-official status they enjoyed. The Salon des Indépendants had the prestige of a glorious past, and it retained the affection and loyalty of artists committed to its jury-free ideals. However, they knew that the work on view was so varied in style and quality that it was not the best showcase for their production. Moreover, in 1922 Paul Signac, the veteran of earlier artistic campaigns and still president of the society, insisted on introducing new rules that were designed to prevent individuals from grouping themselves by affinity and thus “taking over” the Salon—as he thought the Cubists had done in 1920. Artists were thereafter exhibited alphabetically and, from 1924 onward, by nationality. These controversial changes prompted a spate of resignations from the committee, and the response of critics made it clear that the visual interest of the Salon had suffered, even if it had become more democratic. “What distresses old friends of the ‘Independents’ is seeing . . . the institution in danger of sinking, for a stupid history of egalitarian hanging, meaning a standard set from below,” concluded Louis Vauxcelles in 1926.²⁹

The Salon d'Automne was somewhat better regarded in this period. Its policy of selection by jury allowed it to maintain minimum technical and aesthetic standards, and its rather mainstream orientation meant that it concurred with the tempered modern tastes of the contemporary establishment. The Salon's commitment to the decorative arts gave it a practical appeal, which was reinforced by the 1925 exposition. On the other hand, its very success—as celebrated by Frantz Jourdain in a memoir of 1926, where he noted, “Now we are recog-

nized as being of public value”—tended to make it unresponsive to new developments in the art community. Nonetheless, Francis Picabia's right to show in the Salon, which he had earned in an earlier, more conformist phase of his career, gave rise to some surprising exhibits in the early 1920s, such as *The Cacodylatic Eye* (FIG. 8.40) in 1921.

Two initiatives of the 1920s articulated contrasting notions of the function and character of a modern Salon. In 1923 a group of artists from the Nationale, one of the two old “official” Salons, set out to re-create the Salon Unique—a single annual exhibition, based on rigorous selection—which would include the achievements of the independent modern French school stemming from Gustave Courbet, Edouard Manet, and the Impressionists: what the poet André Salmon had labeled *L'Art vivant* (Living art) in an influential book

8.39

Jules Pascin (1885–1930)

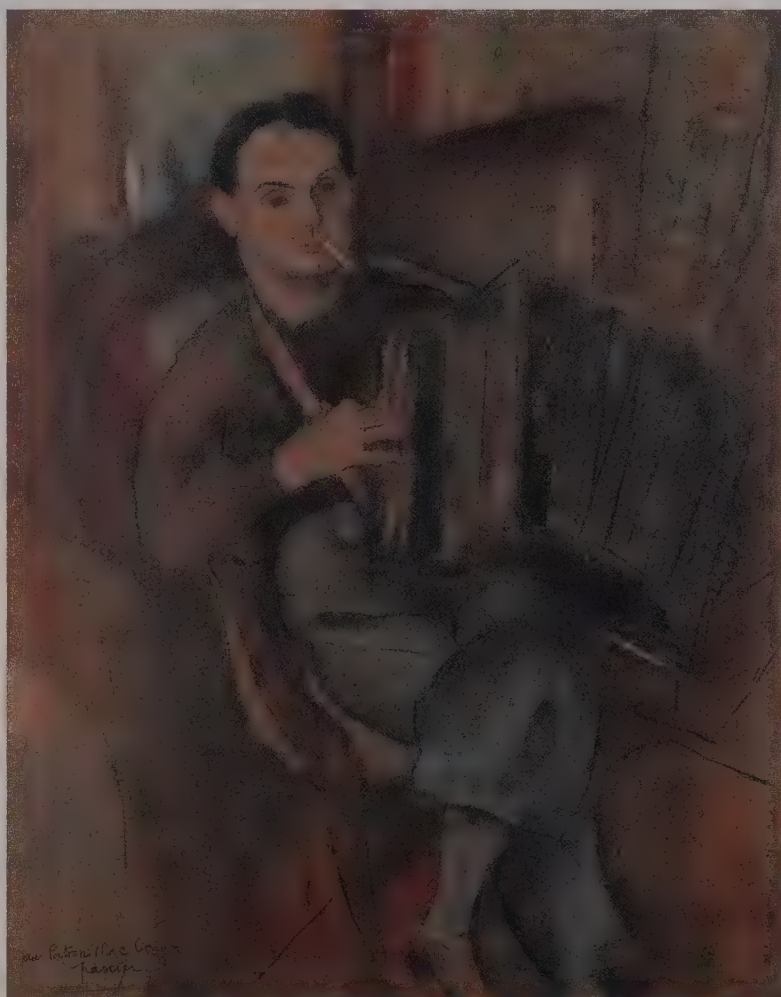
Portrait of Pierre Mac Orlan, 1924

Oil on canvas,

36 1/4 x 28 3/4 in.

(92.1 x 73 cm)

The Metropolitan Museum of Art; the Mr. and Mrs. Klaus G. Perls Collection, 1997



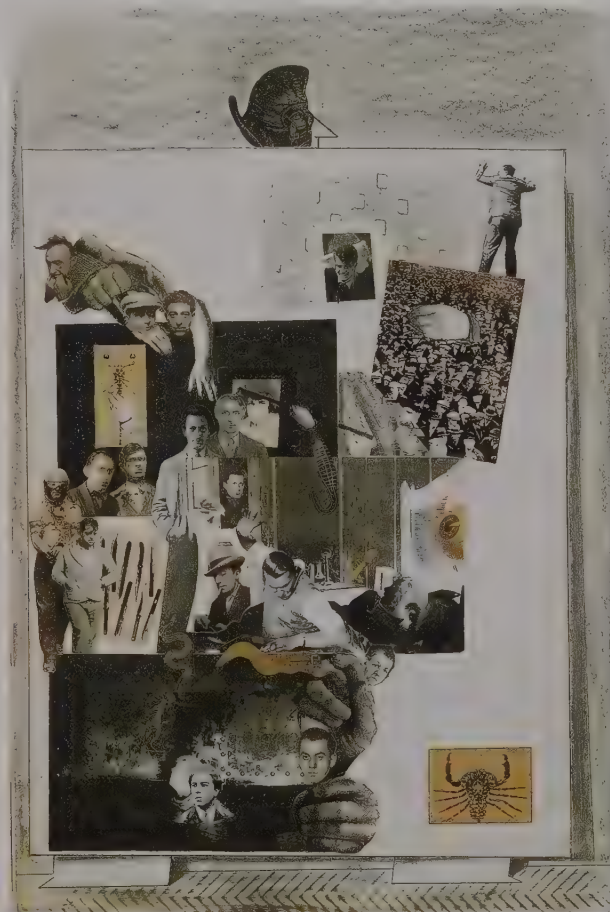
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by that title of 1920. To accomplish this, they used the ingenious device of having two painting juries, one for modernists and one for traditionalists. Their Salon des Tuileries was thus able to exhibit a range of artists representing a broad cross-section of aesthetic tendencies in the city, from Albert Besnard (the president) and Henri Le Sidaner to Kisling and Piet Mondrian (who took part in 1927 and 1928). Their exhibition space at the Porte Maillot, the Palais de Bois (Palace of wood) was, appropriately enough, designed by Auguste Perret. This salon was clearly engaged in the commercial promotion of an elite, if eclectic, group of artists.³⁰ In contrast, the Salon des Surindépendants, founded in 1929, was dedicated to the ideals of freedom and purity. Its declared aim was “to fight against these [selection juries] in letter and spirit . . . to allow artists to present their work freely to the judgment of the public.” The exhibited works were not for sale through the association, and its members were bound not to show in competing venues or in any Salon that involved a selection committee.³¹

One aspect of the competitive and fragmented artistic life of Paris in the interwar period was the constitution of movements and stylistic tendencies, and it was natural that those of like conviction should seek to exhibit together. An alternative to grouping affinities within a Salon—the practice that had so upset Signac at the Indépendants—was to secure exhibition premises as a group. In 1920 a new Section d’Or (Golden section), recalling a groundbreaking show of 1912, was held at the Galerie La Boétie as part of a collective effort to maintain the Cubist “standard”; in 1925 another group organized a large exhibition, *L’Art d’aujourd’hui* (Art today), to assert a radical reading of the Cubist legacy as leading to abstraction. Artists committed to nonfiguration were among those most attracted to the practice of manifesto exhibitions. These artists constituted a still-controversial avant-garde tendency, and their aesthetic beliefs (if not always their personal practice) favored the notion of the collaborative. The groups *Cercle et Carré* (Circle and square) and *Abstraction-Création*, founded at the end of the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, were based on this wish to assert the values of nonfigurative art, particularly in relation to the rival avant-garde of the late 1920s, Surrealism.

The Surrealists were, self-consciously and militantly, a “group” (FIG. 8.41), whose ideas and program were

conveyed by meetings, pamphlets, and a periodical, *La Révolution surréaliste*. A first Surrealist exhibition was held in 1925, one of “Surrealist objects” in 1936, and a large manifesto collection in 1938. However, Surrealism was a movement that originated in literature rather than the visual arts. It proposed a general outlook and philosophy but not a specific style, and for the artists associated with it these exhibitions were in a sense secondary, despite the publicity they attracted. In fact, one of the reasons that members of the abstractionist “school” felt challenged by the Surrealist artists was that the latter had been conspicuously successful in the arena that really counted—securing the support of dealers and collectors. André Masson was attached from 1922 onward to Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler’s postwar gallery, the Galerie Simon; Joan Miró, Max Ernst, and in 1929 Salvador Dalí all had regular backing from new dealers on the Left Bank, and in due course they attracted the interest of the art-dealing establishment on and around the rue La Boétie.



8.40 (opposite)

Francis Picabia
(1879–1953)

The Cacodylatic Eye,
1921

Oil and collage (photos,
postcards, papers) on
canvas, 58½ x 46⅜ in.
(148.6 x 117.4 cm)
Musée National d’Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

8.41

Max Ernst (1891–1976)

*Loplop Introduces
Members of the
Surrealist Group*, 1931

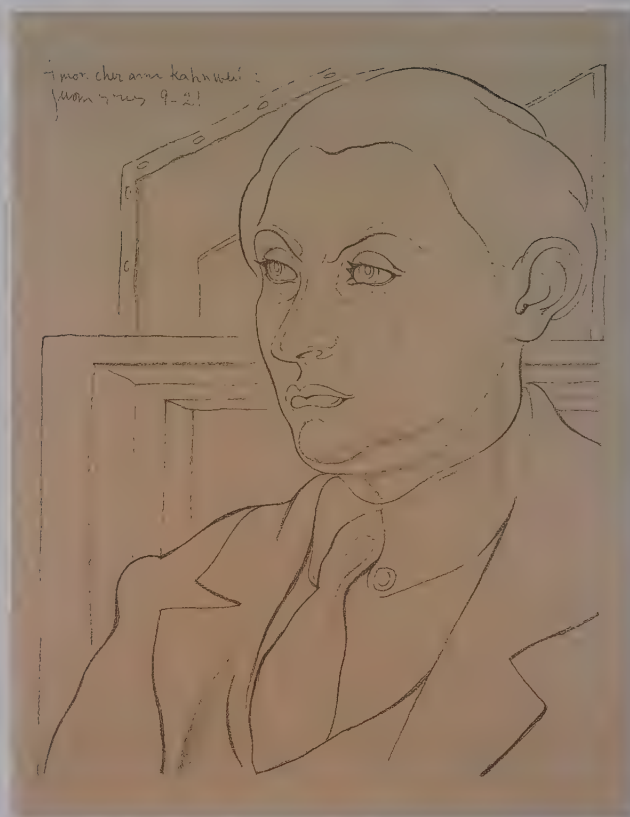
Collage of cut-and-
pasted photographs,
and pencil frottage,
19¾ x 13¼ in.
(50.1 x 33.6 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York

THE ART DEALERS AND THE COLLECTORS

French painters have the good fortune to possess dealers who are excellent managers. One cannot speak too highly of the art dealer.

ROGER AVERMAETE, 1926³²

This view, expressed by the Belgian critic Roger Avermaete, was widely shared by foreign observers. Grete Ring, partner in the major Berlin gallery Paul Cassirer and Co., began a 1931 study comparing the relationship between artists and their dealers in Paris and Berlin by observing that even though the French exhibits at the recent Venice Biennale had been nondescript, they had found buyers despite the poor financial climate. This was indicative, Ring argued, of the highly developed and hierarchical structure of the Parisian art world, where the economic fundamentals of the market were properly understood (unlike in Berlin). Even young artists accepted those fundamentals rather than sullenly and unrealistically resenting them; dealers and collectors collaborated in the speculative promotion of new talent and the effective commercialization of established artists; the press participated in this process by providing an effective platform for artistic promotion.³³ Ring may have presented an exaggeratedly harmonious picture of the Parisian scene, but her analysis was broadly correct. The Parisian commercial art world, which had developed in response to a complex mix of artistic, social, and economic factors during the latter part of the nineteenth century, was based on a large network of dealers, linked to clients in France and abroad, whose active investment in and promotion of contemporary art sustained the burgeoning art community in the city. This network was effectively constituted as a hierarchy: at the bottom were the *marchands de chambre* (collector-dealers with no established exhibition space), and at the top, an elite group offering their clients a guarantee of both artistic quality and financial value, at a price. These principal characteristics of the Parisian market had been established by the turn of the century. The postwar period was marked by a feverish expansion and by the assimilation of some members of the old avant-garde into the top end of the market. The effects of speculation on art were often deplored: nonetheless, the dynamics of the



market were supported by many collectors, as indicated by the spectacular success of the modern-art auctions held at the Hôtel Drouot after 1924.

Dealing attracted men and, increasingly, women from a wide range of backgrounds, backed by resources that varied from virtually nothing to substantial fortunes and with very differing perspectives on contemporary art. The small group of major galleries, which included Durand-Ruel, Bernheim-Jeune, and Paul Rosenberg, were mostly long-established businesses run by men bred to the trade. In contrast, many of the smaller galleries were run by newcomers whose qualifications varied widely, from trading experience in completely unrelated commodities on one hand to little more than artistic enthusiasm on the other. This

8.42

Juan Gris (1887–1927)

*Daniel-Henry
Kahnweiler, 1921*

Pencil on paper,
12 3/4 x 10 1/4 in.

(32.5 x 26 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

diversity contributed to the strength of the Parisian art trade. The sheer numbers of galleries active in the market ensured constant buying and selling; the smaller galleries played a gatekeeping role for their richer colleagues, offering young artists their first commercial exposure and passing the most successful ones on to more prestigious venues; the openness and competitive character of the dealing community was an effective commercial complement to the depth and range of talent among artists in the city.

"Painters start out in Montparnasse either in the cafés or in the flat of one of the foreign bohemian private dealers. . . . After a period of a year with the popular boutiques of the Left Bank, they cross the bridges to install themselves with the magnates of the rue La Boétie, where they attain high prices."³⁴ In this thumbnail sketch of the modern artist's career, Louis Vauxcelles pointed to the zoned character of the art trade in Paris. Small-scale innovative galleries tended to be situated on the Left Bank. Some were in Montparnasse itself, but the majority were on or near the rue de Seine near the Institut and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. The most important dealers, however, those who could provide artists with security and wealth, were still to be found on the Right Bank. Before the war these establishments had been clustered in the business district near the Bourse. The postwar era saw a shift to the west; the majority of Right Bank galleries were now close to the rue La Boétie, in the quarter north of the Champs-Élysées that was the heart of fashionable Paris. The structure, role, and human complexity of this key sector of the Parisian art world can be illuminated by considering a number of its most important and characteristic figures, grouped according to this basic distinction—their location on the Right or Left Bank. Right Bank dealers, broadly, had a sounder financial basis than those on the left. Without excluding enthusiasm and commitment, they envisaged art dealing as fundamentally a business activity. Left Bank dealers were closer—literally and psychologically—to the art community. Often this corresponded also to relative penury and to a commitment based more on personal ties and artistic empathy than to commercial strategy.

Key figures among Right Bank dealers were Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, Léonce and Paul Rosenberg, and Paul Guillaume. Kahnweiler's prewar gallery had been



on the rue Vignon. When he succeeded in reestablishing himself in Paris in 1920, his Galerie Simon was again on the Right Bank but farther to the west, on the rue d'Astorg, near the rue La Boétie. Kahnweiler (FIG. 8.42) was never a dealer on a grand scale. His strategy had been to focus on a small, coherent group of artists and to assemble a large, exclusive stock of their work. Given his astute selection of artists, this was a sound business policy but also one that required considerable capital. To his great, and justifiable, bitterness, the French government sequestered his gallery stock at the end of World War I and sold it at auction. As a result, Kahnweiler found himself deprived of the returns on his prewar investment and operating in a context in which the art with which he was associated—Cubism—had been commercially undermined by what was effectively the flooding of the market. The backing of an old friend, André Simon Cahen, and an arrangement with another old ally, the German dealer Alfred Flechtheim, overcame his financial problems, but the gallery never quite regained the focus and élan of the prewar years. Kahnweiler's particular gift—to combine

8.43

André Derain
(1880–1954)

*Portrait of Madame
Paul Guillaume in
a Large Hat*, c. 1928

Oil on canvas,
36 3/16 x 28 1/16 in.
(92 x 73 cm)

Musée de l'Orangerie

8.44

Georges Rouault
(1871–1958)

Clown and Child, from
André Soares, *Cirque*
(published by Ambroise
Vollard), 1930

Lift ground aquatint,
aquatint, and etching
over photogravure;
plate: 12¼ x 8⅜ in.
(31.2 x 21.2 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; gift of
the artist

artistic perspicacity and long-term personal commitment with a firm grasp of business realities—stood him in good stead after the war, but he was also relatively stymied by the unavailability of the artists he most admired and by the unreliability of some of those he was able to put under contract.

During the war the Cubist cause had been taken up by Léonce Rosenberg, and he was Kahnweiler's immediate competitor when the latter set out to reestablish himself in Paris. However, by 1921 Rosenberg was himself in financial difficulties. Kahnweiler took quiet satisfaction from this; for him, beyond the personal rivalry between them, Léonce Rosenberg represented a model of how not to proceed in the art business.



Rosenberg had allowed a theoretical predilection to cloud his aesthetic and financial judgment and then behaved irresponsibly in trying to overcome the consequences of his own mistakes.³⁵ Gino Severini, who remained attached to Rosenberg's Galerie de l'Effort Moderne throughout the 1920s, later portrayed his dealer as torn among different roles—the connoisseur and scholar, the dealer, and the grand bourgeois—concluding that he was truly himself only in the first of these.³⁶ Although he had inherited the Galerie Alexandre Rosenberg jointly with his younger brother Paul, Léonce had retired from the business before World War I and devoted himself to collecting. His support for Cubism in 1915–16 and his founding of the Galerie de l'Effort Moderne on the rue de Baume in 1918 constituted a personal adventure and even a crusade. This was both the strength and the weakness of the enterprise: Rosenberg's energy, wealth, and grand style gave his campaign a high profile, but his obsession with Cubism, and his sense of self-importance in relation to it, led him to have unrealistic ideas about the nature of the market and to misjudge the quality and character of the art he was buying. Very quickly he acquired a large stock of pictures that did include work by Picasso and Braque but also featured far less marketable artists, such as Maria Blanchard, Jean Metzinger, Henri Hayden, Auguste Herbin, Diego Rivera, and Jacques Lipchitz. Moreover, a combination of resentment at his interfering and high-handed manner, lack of sympathy with his single-minded pro-Cubism policy, and enticements from elsewhere resulted in the departure of many from the gallery.

Although he cooperated with the state in auctioning off Kahnweiler's prewar stock, and apparently even encouraged this highly controversial step, Rosenberg too suffered from the consequent flooding of the market. In order to stay afloat he was forced to cash in his most valuable assets, his works by Picasso, by selling them to his brother. As a result, when demand escalated in the mid-1920s, he was not able to profit from it fully. In a 1934 letter to the New York collector Albert E. Gallatin, Rosenberg claimed that because of Kahnweiler's fury at the auctions, the latter had campaigned against Cubism in the early 1920s. Rosenberg suggested that Braque and Gris had followed Picasso's example in first abandoning a Cubist style and then

readopting it, and observed, “The cubists are much greater artists than the Impressionists, but more *politicians*, unfortunately.”³⁷ There was in Léonce’s makeup a combination of unworldliness and arrogance that set him apart from his colleagues and, indeed, to some extent from reality.

His brother Paul seems to have shared something of Léonce’s nervous energy and passion, but he expressed it very differently and, as a dealer, far more successfully. Throughout this period the core business of the Galerie Paul Rosenberg in the rue La Boétie was trading in its stock of paintings by nineteenth-century masters, works for which there was an expanding international demand and escalating profit margins. He had ventured into the contemporary art scene before the war by giving Marie Laurencin a contract. This was a deliberate response to the taste of smart Parisian society, and fashion was also a factor in his decision (taken with the discreet backing of an even more blue-chip colleague, Georges Wildenstein) to buy paintings by Picasso in 1918. While his brother saw the artist as the historic leader of the Cubist movement, Paul realized that modernist innovation corresponded to a developing taste within the elite—*le tout Paris*—provided it was marketed in terms of individual and not collective artistic style. With his range, unpredictability, and virtuosity, Picasso was ideally suited to satisfy this demand. Paul Rosenberg promoted him in a series of carefully staged exhibitions through the 1920s, initially playing down the Cubist aspect of his work but later showing it as one element in the artist’s protean creativity. “He is a painter whose works, though having different exteriors, are always the same,” he told the New York collector John Quinn in 1922. “Picasso is always ever himself and is the greatest master of the present time. For myself, I enjoy every lot of his work.”³⁸

By that time the American market finally appeared to be maturing to the point that it would buy advanced modern art at the high prices that were the Paul Rosenberg Gallery’s trademark. Like his brother, Paul had high hopes of finding American buyers for contemporary French art in the early 1920s, but in 1921 Quinn had warned them both that New York was not yet ready for Picasso. Paul, with several connections to the French dealers already established there, was ready to bide his time. “Slowly and slowly, I am preparing the NY market

for me,” he told Quinn. “In two or three years, I shall open a firm in your town.”³⁹ At the end of the decade—with collectors like Albert E. Gallatin, the Chester Dales, Walter P. Chrysler Jr., and Lillie Bliss buying contemporary French art, and with the founding of the Museum of Modern Art under Alfred Barr’s direction—this strategy came to fruition. Although the crash and its consequences interrupted the process, the prestige of Parisian modernism remained intact, and as the 1930s progressed, Rosenberg was able to deploy his remarkable skills as a salesman to increasing effect. When the war finally drove him out of Paris, New York was ready for him.⁴⁰

American money, that of Dr. Albert Barnes, was a key factor in the fortunes of another prominent Right Bank dealer of the postwar era, Paul Guillaume (and also of Matisse, from whom Barnes would commission a mural for his collection in Merion, Pennsylvania, the first version of which is now in Paris; FIG. 8.45). Though he lacked the funds and the pedigree of the Rosenbergs, a combination of good luck, astute buying, and effective self-promotion (particularly through the review *Les Arts à Paris*) had made Guillaume both rich and famous by the end of the 1920s. He had understood very early the commercial potential of African art; it was his reputation in this field that had led Barnes to his gallery in the rue La Boétie. He also became one of the first serious dealers to buy and promote the work of Modigliani, Soutine, and Maurice Utrillo—all of whom were highly prized by middecade. It was this triple combination of African statuary, works by the School of Paris, and paintings by Derain that constituted the eclectic basis of his wealth and importance on the Parisian scene. The type of modern art found in Guillaume’s gallery increasingly represented approved taste, and he walked a tightrope between sustaining an image as a daring pioneer and cultivating his clientele in the French establishment. Shortly before his early death in 1934, Guillaume announced the intention of turning his collection into a public foundation. Much later, that ambition was realized in the form of the Collection Guillaume/Walter, which had been augmented by his widow (FIG. 8.43) and her second husband, Jean Walter, and given to the nation; it is now on permanent display in the Musée de l’Orangerie in Paris.

Whereas no major Right Bank gallery was run by a woman, several small-gallery owners were female—entry into this end of the art trade was more open in terms of gender as well as capital. Pierre Loeb, Léopold Zborowski, and Jeanne Bucher, who founded galleries on the Left Bank between 1924 and 1927, each played a significant role in the Parisian art world of the period. They also offer telling contrasts in background, strategy, and style. Of the three, Loeb—whose Galerie Pierre, set up on the rue Bonaparte in 1924 and moved to the corner of the rue de Seine and rue des Beaux-Arts in 1926, survived until his death in 1964—had the closest affinities with the *grandes* of the rue La Boétie, several of whom he knew quite well. He came from a business background and began the gallery with modest capital (fifty thousand francs). He never had a regular stable of artists, but he had arrangements at various times with Alberto Giacometti, Jules Pascin, Marcel Gromaire, Jean Hélion, and Miró, among others. Unlike many of his colleagues, Loeb remained active in the 1930s and took the opportunity to purchase work from many established artists, including Braque, Matisse, and Picasso. The exhibitions held at the Galerie Pierre from 1924 to 1939 represented a broad cross section of contemporary art. Loeb was a nonpartisan dealer, for whom Picasso—particularly in his Cubist period—represented the apogee of modern art, and he remained open to a broad range of styles and credos. He had close links with the Surrealist circle and hosted the first exhibition of Surrealist painting in November 1925, but he also admired and bought the work of Pierre Bonnard, and he later took issue with what he considered to be Breton's sectarian and antiaesthetic arguments in *Le Surréalisme et la peinture* (1928).⁴¹ Loeb's gallery functioned in two ways: he maintained a regular and varied exhibition program, selling both on a commission basis and work he had purchased outright, and he also sought out individual pieces by modern masters to add to his stock. In the long term, the latter probably made the greatest contribution to his turnover. This pattern was typical of a medium-size gallery. It meant that new work was constantly being presented to the public and that trade in established modern artists was developed through a large network of commercial agents with widely differing financial resources.

Louis Vauxcelles, quoted above, was probably thinking

specifically of Léopold Zborowski in his tart reference to “bohemians” active in the market. As an impecunious member of the foreign community in Montparnasse during the war, Zborowski had begun to trade in art as a way to make a living and help his friends and acquaintances, who included Kisling, Modigliani, Soutine, and Utrillo. He operated from his flat on the rue Joseph Bara until 1926, when he opened a gallery on the rue de Seine. This was a reflection of Zborowski's relative success: his position as a pioneer of the School of Paris had provided him with a stock of paintings, and a range of contacts, that were now highly valuable. In 1928–29, for example, he was able to sell a Modigliani painting to Paul Guillaume's London gallery for £1,483 (around \$7,500 or 180,000 francs) and a Utrillo view of the rue Girardon to a Paris dealer for 55,000 francs.⁴² For a short period Zborowski was rich and very active, doing business throughout Europe and in the United States, handling and authenticating the stars of the School of Paris, and promoting lesser-known figures such as Pinchus Krémègne and Henri Hayden. However, the financial basis of his operations was never particularly solid. He fell into debt with both artists and colleagues, and after the 1929 crash he found it very hard to do business. An inclination to gamble created further problems. By



the time he died in 1932, the money had run out.

In taste, style, and temperament, Jeanne Bucher was closer to Loeb than to Zborowski. She showed little interest in the expressive treatment of the figure characteristic of the School of Paris. She was, like Loeb, receptive to art influenced by Surrealism but saw the Cubist tradition as the key tendency in modern art. Her first exhibition, in 1925, included *papiers collés* by Picasso and other Cubist pieces by Braque and Gris. The inaugural show in the new space she opened in 1929 included these artists, together with Ernst, Miró, Jean Lurçat, Louis Marcoussis, Henri Laurens, and Lipchitz; she was responsible for Mondrian's first one-man exhibition in Paris, in 1928.

Hers was an enterprise marked by engagement with avant-garde art, by an association with literature, and by modesty. Apart from an arrangement with André Bauchant, she had no contracts with artists; her exhibitions were usually quite small, attended by a circle of friends and cognoscenti, with sales made on a commission basis. She kept her business afloat by astute purchases of secondary works by the new masters, particularly the Cubists. In the 1930s and 1940s she took the view (which turned out to be correct) that these were the *valeurs sûres* (safe stocks) of the future,

and she acquired work by Picasso, Braque, Gris, and Léger whenever possible. Like Loeb's, but on a smaller scale, her gallery demonstrated how adventurous, generous support of new art was sustained by the trade in established modern work. And like both Loeb and Zborowski, she exemplified the role played in the market by gatekeepers, those who for a modest outlay and modest rewards undertook the high-risk role of bringing artists to the attention of the rest of the Parisian art world.

The boundary between commercial traders in art and art collectors was often blurred. On one hand, the dealer Ambroise Vollard installed himself in a sumptuous town house, hoarded his pictures, and devoted much of his time and resources to the production of uniquely refined illustrated books (FIG. 8.44). On the other, private collectors such as Daniel Tzanck built up collections rapidly and sent selections from them into speculative auctions at the Hôtel Drouot. Some collectors became established dealers—a prominent example was André Level, initiator of the celebrated La Peau de l'Ours (The bear's skin) collectors' club before World War I, who opened the Galerie Percier at 38 rue La Boétie in 1921, in partnership with some friends who shared his enthusiasm for contemporary art.

8.45

Henri Matisse (1869–1954)
Dance, mural project
for the Barnes Foundation,
first version, 1932

Oil on canvas,
11 ft. 1 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. x 9 ft. 5 in.,
11 ft. 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. x 16 ft. 4 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.,
and 10 ft. 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. x
12 ft. 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (3.4 x 2.87,
3.55 x 5.00, and 3.33 x
3.91 m)
Musée d'Art Moderne
de la Ville de Paris



One of the distinctive features of Paris as an art center was the extensive culture of collecting within its elite groups. Since at least 1870, buyers had existed for an unusually wide variety of artistic products, including avant-garde ones.⁴³ The particular conditions of the 1920s, a period of inflation and relative prosperity during which conservative cultural values came increasingly into question and which saw the culmination of a long period of artistic dynamism, led to a convergence of taste that favored independent contemporary art. Significant numbers of collectors, with widely differing outlooks and expectations, became engaged in acquiring it, as the following four examples illustrate.

In June 1923 the vicomte de Noailles bought a small landscape by Picasso as a present for his wife, for twelve hundred francs. This inaugurated a decade of patronage of the contemporary arts by the Noailles couple that was exceptional in its intensity and daring. By 1926 their collection included Cubist paintings by Braque, Gris, and Picasso; a Mondrian; work by Derain, Ernst, Léger, Masson, and Picabia; and sculpture by József Csáky, Laurens, and Lipchitz, acquired from a range of galleries, at auction, and directly from artists. Some of these were intended for the Noailleses' summer villa at Hyères, in the south of France, which they had commissioned in 1923 from Mallet-Stevens, with interiors and furniture by a cross section of contemporary designers including Djo-Bourgeois, Pierre Chareau,

Eileen Gray, and Theo van Doesburg, and a modern "Cubist" garden by Gabriel Guévrékian. This activity continued up to the economic slump, oriented particularly toward Surrealism and modern sculpture, the respective preferences of the vicomtesse and the vicomte. The Noailleses owned, for example, Dalí's *Dismal Sport* (1929; private collection) and a "Surrealist table" by Giacometti. Also excited by the possibilities of cinema, they courted scandal in 1930 through their backing of Luis Buñuel's libertarian film *L'Âge d'or* (The golden age; FIG. 8.50), the final scene of which makes a blasphemous identification of Jesus with the arch villain of the marquis de Sade's *One Hundred Days of Sodom*. The right-wing press fomented a campaign against the film that led to a fracas at the small art cinema where it was showing, and its confiscation by the police.

Charles and Marie-Laure de Noailles were key figures in a network of wealthy socialites in Paris that also included Comte Etienne de Beaumont, Madame Errazuriz, Baron Gourgaud, Vicomte de Leché, and Charles de Beistegui. Their espousal confirmed that avant-garde art and design had become fashionable, thanks to promotion by dealers and critics and the social cachet conferred by Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes. The wealth and social assurance of the Noailleses meant that, once persuaded of the significance of the avant-garde, they supported it without reservations induced

8.46 (below, left)

Marcel Coard
(1889–1975)

Armchair, c. 1923

Oak and red lacquer,
34 x 26 x 31 in.
(86.4 x 66 x 78.7 cm)
Musée des Arts
Décoratifs; gift of Jean
Dubrujeaud

8.47 (below, right)

Pierre Legrain
(1889–1929)

Stained oak dresser,
c. 1923

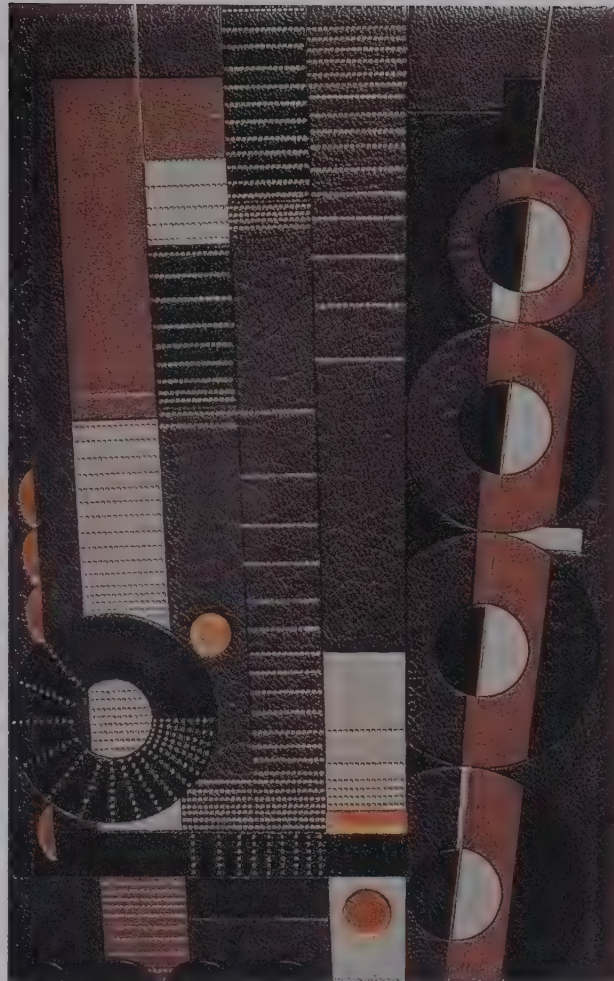
Colored oak, gilded
steel, and ivory,
44 1/16 x 56 1/16 x 13 in.
(112 x 144 x 33 cm)
Musée des Arts Décoratifs



by either a need to conform or financial constraints. As a result, they made a major contribution to its development and success.

In 1928 the Noailleses bought a large Picasso figure painting of 1908 from Jeanne Bucher for 120,000 francs. Only four years earlier, Jacques Doucet had acquired *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* (see FIG. 7.101) directly from the artist for 25,000 francs. These purchases indicate both the extent to which Picasso's prices had escalated during these boom years and the similar tastes of important collectors. Doucet, too, owned work by Braque, Csáky, Derain, Ernst, Laurens, and Miró. He had financed Marcel Duchamp's Roto Reliefs and bought several Picabias. And, even more effectively than the Noailleses, he had also supported the contemporary applied arts, playing a key role in the careers of several designers, including Rose Adler, Eileen Gray, and Pierre-Emile Legrain (the last-named became a specialist bookbinder through Doucet's patronage and encouragement; FIG. 8.48). Like the Noailleses, Doucet behaved more like a patron than a collector; he fostered personal contact with artists and took a keen interest in their work and careers. His style was, in fact, self-consciously aristocratic, but he was never quite treated as an equal by the social elite. He was, after all, "in trade" as a couturier. The slights that this had caused him in society were probably one of the motivations for his grand, daring, and fastidious attention to art.

In 1912, in one of the most celebrated auctions of the era, Doucet liquidated the collection of eighteenth-century fine and applied arts that he had built up in parallel with the Maison Doucet and that he had installed in a purpose-built *hôtel* in the rue Spontini. After this public demonstration of his taste as applied to the then fashionable Rococo, he turned to contemporary art and, with age, became increasingly radical. Doucet worked through advisers, who were themselves beneficiaries of his patronage. The most long-standing of these was the Symbolist writer André Suarès, who played a key role in the construction of Doucet's outstanding collection of fine books and literary manuscripts. In the early 1920s Doucet employed Louis Aragon and André Breton to provide critical information on the younger generation. Many of his purchases of contemporary art, including Picasso's *Demoiselles*, were made on Breton's advice. The culmination of this activity was the installa-



tion in 1928 of major works from Doucet's collection in a specially conceived environment, the "Studio" annex to his *hôtel* in Neuilly. This was an intimate but sumptuous suite of rooms designed by a team led by Legrain (FIGS. 8.46 and 8.47). Unlike the Noailles villa, which was an homage to an antihistoricist, "high-tech" conception of the modern aesthetic, Doucet's studio celebrated a more sensual approach, characterized by the innovative deployment of traditional skills in interior design, leading to a dense, harmonious ensemble of materials and forms that, while resolutely modern, was also a statement of a French tradition of taste and craftsmanship.

Both the Noailleses and Doucet sought to be acknowledged leaders of contemporary taste. Each maintained a "court": a network of relationships with artists and writers, including some of direct or indirect dependence, that provided them with up-to-date information on events and trends in the art world and also contributed

8.48
Pierre Legrain
(1889–1929)
Book cover for
*Les Cantiques des
Cantiques* (The Song
of Songs), 1925
Inlaid leather
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France

8.49

Henri Matisse
(1869–1954)

*Odalisque in Red
Trousers*, c. 1924–1925

Oil on canvas,
19 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 24 in.
(50 x 61 cm)

Musée de l'Orangerie

to their high public profile. Roger Dutilleul was a prominent example of a very different type of collector, a more retiring, discreet figure, with a private, passionate relationship to art works that contrasted with his sober, bourgeois professional life (as an *administrateur-délégué* on the board of a cement company). Dutilleul started collecting in his twenties and discovered modern art shortly afterward, in 1907. He was attracted, in part, by its low price—he was able to buy one of Braque's now celebrated *L'Estaque* series in 1908 for one hundred

francs, for example. Up to 1914 Dutilleul purchased most of his pictures from Kahnweiler, and the latter's principled and cerebral commitment to modernism was an important influence on him. After the war Dutilleul continued to buy work by Braque, Léger, and Picasso, often from Kahnweiler's Galerie Simon, but he was also attracted to the School of Paris, particularly Modigliani but also Kisling and Soutine, and to work by Utrillo.

Dutilleul was opposed to speculative transactions in art and rarely bought at auction. The involvement of



the auctioneers of the Hôtel Drouot in the promotion of contemporary art was, however, a major feature of the Parisian scene. It was there that the triumph of contemporary independent art—“*l’art vivant*”—was publicly demonstrated; for many collectors, auctions provided both a source of paintings and the occasional opportunity for financial gain. This was true of Daniel Tzanck, a well-known supporter of modern art in the city. Tzanck came from a successful Russian immigrant family and had qualified as a dentist at the turn of the century. However, his main interests were cultural, stimulated by some of his clients (who included Apollinaire). His art collection was broad—a selection sent to auction in 1925 included pieces by fifty-three artists—but relatively mainstream.⁴⁴ He was a friend of the painter Jean Crotti and had accepted a spoof check from Crotti’s brother-in-law, Marcel Duchamp, in exchange for dental treatment, but on the whole he seems to have preferred the more qualified modernism of Derain, Vlaminck, and Utrillo to the avant-gardes of the interwar years.

“If art criticism served no purpose, art dealers would not have it done.”⁴⁵ Pierre Mille’s cynical reply to a questionnaire on the nature and influence of art criticism in 1927 reflected a common prejudice, that the proliferation of writing about contemporary art was manipulated by the true masters of the art world, dealers. Critics were constantly defending themselves against the accusation of venality. In a milieu where several prominent journals were attached to art galleries, where catalogs to one-man shows began with remunerated prefaces, and where it was common practice for an artist to donate a small work in gratitude for a friendly review, this was not always easy. Yet many people argued that criticism had virtually no real influence on taste. It was only useful, quipped the couturier Paul Poiret, in the sense that it provided a living for “a handful of ignoramus.”⁴⁶ What observers agreed on was the ubiquity of critics and criticism on the Parisian scene. The character, events, and personalities of the art life of the city were endlessly reported on and analyzed in a spectrum of publications ranging from major newspapers like *Excelsior*, with circulations above one hundred thousand, to specialist, partisan publications such as Marcel Hiver’s *CAP*, which sold only a few hundred copies.

Paris not only possessed an enterprising, highly variegated publishing trade and a large informed reader-

ship, it was also full of talented writers for whom art criticism could be both a medium of self-expression and a welcome source of income. Louis Vauxcelles—who was employed by two characteristic press barons of the period, Pierre Laffitte (*Excelsior*) and Albert Dubarry (*Le Carnet de la semaine*), and was omnipresent in the press during the 1920s—represented one type of critic, the professional who saw his task as essentially one of reporting on the art scene. “Not a boring, solemn theoretician . . . but a journalist, a sensible reporter, deeply informed, witty, quick, and devoid of pedantry,” as he put it in a memo to his employer.⁴⁷ André Salmon represented another characteristic type—the creative writer turned critic from necessity, basing his work on close personal contacts in the art world. Versions of the personalized “poets’ criticism” that Salmon advocated were widespread in Paris, particularly in the many little reviews that came and went during the interwar years. These included the English-language *Transition*, published by Eugene Jolas, in which writing about the Parisian artistic avant-garde appeared alongside the best experimental writing of the time. In a variant on this model, *La Nouvelle Revue française*, which retained its authority as the mouthpiece of the Parisian literary elite (or some of it) in these years, employed the painter André Lhote as art critic during the 1920s. Another influential type of art writing was that of “engaged” criticism: the forceful defense of specific artistic tendencies. Léonce Rosenberg paid Maurice Raynal to provide this type of writing for his *Bulletin de l’effort moderne* in 1924. *Cahiers d’art*, founded by Christian Zervos in 1926, provided broad coverage of the Parisian art scene but also rapidly established itself as an influential supporter of avant-garde art influenced by Cubism.

In a letter to the review *Comœdia* in 1925 Tzanck pointed out, with some justification, that “one has to go to Moscow if one wishes to admire a representative body of the most recent French painting.”⁴⁸ Contemporary art production in Paris was based on a network of organizations and commercial agents that was exceptionally broad and open to innovation; there existed a very active group of collectors interested in modern art and design; and the range and volume of critical writing on art in the general and the specialized press in Paris was unprecedented; but support from the state—and thus public visibility for the new art—was limited. The reluctance of



8.50
Luis Buñuel (1900–1983)
Film still from *L'Age d'or* (*The Golden Age*),
1930

official French institutions to recognize the achievements of independent art, from Gustave Courbet onward, quickly became legendary. The rift between the state and “l’art vivant” was probably greatest during the decade before World War I; after 1918 a gradual convergence began to take place. In 1925 Vauxcelles was considered for the post of director of the Musée du Luxembourg, the section of the national galleries devoted to contemporary French art. In his draft letter of application he argued that the museum as constituted gave “a very mediocre idea of the richness of the French school.” He admitted that he had been a polemicist for modern art but claimed that he no longer needed to be one, because the battle had been won. The problem now was that the state could not afford the work of the modern masters it had finally recognized.⁴⁹ Vauxcelles was not appointed, and the Luxembourg remained a relatively conservative institution.

However, a momentum for change gradually developed at this time. In 1929 Louis Hautecoeur, the newly appointed director of the Luxembourg, put forward a project for a proper new museum of modern art. This was not acted on immediately, but the administration recognized that the national museums in Paris were in need of reform and renovation. In 1927 the director

of the museum service, Henri Verne, had launched an ambitious plan to reorganize and expand the Louvre that was put into operation in stages from 1930 onward—transforming the rather cluttered and confusing palace into an ordered museological space. The question of the proper display of modern art remained, however. Most of the Impressionist pictures acquired by the state through the Gustave Caillebotte bequest were transferred from the Luxembourg to the Louvre in 1928. Hautecoeur used the space opened up by this move to increase the display of recent French art. The state had purchased its first Matisse, *Odalisque in Red Trousers*, in 1923 (the *Odalisque* shown here, figure 8.49, dates from the mid-1920s). By 1933 the Luxembourg owned two works by this artist, four by Derain, three by André Dunoyer de Segonzac, two by Maurice Vlaminck, and one each by Braque, Marcel Gromaire, Léger, and Georges Rouault. The work of foreign artists, whether or not they were resident in Paris, was collected separately through the Musée des Ecoles Etrangères, also reorganized at the end of the 1920s. This museum also was reorganized at the end of the 1920s. The Jeu de Paume exhibition space that had housed these collections since 1922 was renovated and reopened in 1932 with a focus on contemporary foreign art. By middecade the anomaly of this separation was recognized in official circles, and the need for a distinct museum of modern art had finally been accepted. A joint project with the Paris city council, a national museum with a municipal gallery alongside it was a central feature of the 1937 exposition.

Various circumstances impeded further evolution of modern art museums in Paris. Lack of money and uncertainty about the international situation delayed the installation of permanent collections in either of the newly constructed museums. After the hiatus caused by the outbreak of World War II, the Musée National d’Art Moderne was inaugurated hastily in August 1942 to prevent the Germans from taking over the space—the work on view was suitably tailored to the times. It was only in the changed circumstances of 1945 that the state undertook a determined policy of acquiring independent modern works and that the national museum of modern art envisaged by the progressives of the 1930s was finally realized, under the direction of one of their number, Jean Cassou.

PAINTING AND SCULPTURE AFTER CUBISM

The exhibition of recent modern art in the Petit Palais that was sponsored by the city council in 1937 to complement the state-funded display of French masterpieces through the ages held in the new museums was entitled *Les Maîtres de l'art indépendant*. This show constituted an acknowledgment by the establishment that the most significant contribution Paris had made to art since the 1890s emanated from the modern tradition instituted by the Impressionists and their successors. As its title indicates, the exhibition emphasized the role of strong, independent artistic personalities in the history of modern art in the city. It

encountered some opposition, fueled by reactionary nationalist sentiment, but this survey represented a largely consensual view of the art of the previous forty years. According to this view, a small group of artists had developed their own powerful and original styles while respecting the great achievements of the past; important contributions to the art life of the city had been made by foreigners, but their presence in Paris reflected above all the continuing dominance of French taste in the visual arts. In contrast, *Origines et développement de l'art international indépendant*, the rival exhibition at the Jeu de Paume on the theme of

8.51

Le Corbusier
(Charles-Edouard
Jeanneret) (1887–1965)

Still Life, 1920

Oil on canvas,
31½ x 39¼ in.
(80.9 x 99.7 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; van
Gogh purchase fund





8.52

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Three Women at the Spring, 1921

Oil on canvas, 80¼ x 68½ in. (203.9 x 174 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York; gift of Mr. and Mrs. Allan D. Emil



8.53

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Three Musicians, summer 1921

Oil on canvas, 79 x 87¾ in. (200.7 x 222.9 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund



8.54

Georges Braque
(1882–1963)

Canéphore, also called
Caryatid, 1922

Oil on canvas,
70¹⁵/₁₆ x 28⁷/₁₆ in.
(180 x 72 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

the origins and development of international independent art, acknowledged the importance of movements and groups for the history of recent art and stressed the international character of the avant-garde. These two shows reflected key features of the art life of Paris between the wars. The period 1918–39 was one during which a group of modern masters received due recognition from the market, critics, and even the state, while conflicting models for new artistic practice competed for attention and support. Critical debates on contemporary art in the city during this period centered on the nature of the Cubist legacy to contemporary art, the relationship between Parisian art and French national identity, and the interaction between art and life.

Purism was the product of an artistic and intellectual collaboration between Amédée Ozenfant and the architect-painter Le Corbusier. Launched by an exhibition in 1918 at a gallery set up by the couturière Germaine Bongard on her premises in the rue de Penthhièvre, it was explicated by a pamphlet entitled *Après le cubisme* and then propagated in the pages of *L'Esprit nouveau* (the influential review founded in 1920). Purism was above all an attempt to develop a rationalist aesthetic, with implications not only for painting but also for architecture and design, that built on the Cubist experiment and reconciled it with universal principles of beauty based on geometry, the French classical tradition of order in art and architecture, and modernity as embodied in the machine. Purist paintings (FIG. 8.51) are invariably still lifes, similar to many Cubist works but devoid of topical or disruptive elements. They were based on a planned geometric structure and sober relationships of flatly applied colors. The regularity of the forms and objects was justified by the rather chilling concept of “mechanical selection”—the Purist notion that machine production led to the use of simple, harmonious geometric forms in daily life. These ideas had some influence on artists, particularly in the circle of the Galerie de l'Effort Moderne. But this austere conception of the Cubist legacy was basically at odds with prevalent thinking within the art community and its public. Braque and Picasso had, in fact, never conceived of Cubism as theory-driven. In the postwar years they both distanced themselves, in different ways, from the notion of a Cubist “school” of the type envisaged by Léonce Rosenberg and emphasized their commitment

to personal style and an intuitive aesthetic.

Picasso had openly seceded from the Cubist movement during the war. In the early 1920s he reinforced his point with a series of figurative works deploying a range of styles, including references to classical statuary and to nineteenth-century masters. In the summer of 1921 at Fontainebleau he painted both the monumental *Three Women at the Spring* (FIG. 8.52) and two versions of the *Three Musicians* (FIG. 8.53). The former painting employs an idiosyncratic version of classicism, while the latter makes use of a crisp, decorative Cubist vocabulary that makes the commedia dell'arte figures look like flat, colorful puppets on a stage. This provocative and dazzling balancing act between innovation and tradition, together with the bravura plundering and transformation of styles (including his own), became Picasso's trademarks in the interwar years. He retained his status as a modernist while emphasizing his individual genius, his right to be only himself.

Braque was given a special room at the 1922 Salon d'Automne, and his display there confirmed his position as an acknowledged master of the modern school. It included sober, delicate still lifes in a loose Cubist style and two large, decorative panels depicting canephores (FIG. 8.54). These employed Braque's characteristic somber but glowing palette and a highly stylized figurative mode of drawing to depict two traditional images of abundance, reminiscent of Jean Goujon's nymphs on the Fontaine des Innocents of 1549 (see FIG. 3.9). Braque may well have been responding to the example of others, including Picasso. At the least, these paintings, and indeed Braque's work in general at this time, asserted his affinity with the art of the past and his lack of sympathy with readings of Cubism as either an art of rupture or as a starting point for a rational technological aesthetic, as advocated by the Purists. In his review of the exhibition, Vauxcelles, who had led a ferocious campaign against Léonce Rosenberg's attempt to promote Cubism as the postwar orthodoxy, rejoiced in Braque's abandoning of rigid geometric precepts. While his reading exaggerated Braque's "defection," there was no doubt that the painter was now seeking to emphasize the sensual and more traditional aspects of his work. This was in tune with his temperament and artistic beliefs; it also accorded with one powerful current in the Parisian cultural milieu, which favored a "rappel à l'ordre" (return



8.55

Georges Braque
(1882–1963)

The Table, 1928

Oil and sand on canvas,
70 3/4 x 28 3/4 in.
(179.7 x 73 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York



to order) in artistic practice through the reassertion of tradition and specifically French values in art.

Throughout these years Braque was close to André Derain, who became his neighbor on the rue du Douanier in 1928. Derain was far more committed to a critique of artistic modernity than Braque, but they shared a belief in humanist artistic principles, wide-ranging curiosity about the art of the past, and a strong sense of their French identity. Presenting an interview with Braque in 1928, Tériade commented that he “finds himself in the grand classic line, without having imitated any ‘aspect’ of the old masters, through this fact of discovering the same truths as they did, and forming a painter’s sense equivalent to theirs. He carries in him the authenticity of the land and race from which he comes.” Asked what he thought of Cubism, Braque replied: “I don’t know! . . . I do not believe in movements. I only believe in man and his human quality. Work is an emanation of personality.”⁵⁰ The pictures he showed Tériade during the interview included a series of variations on the theme of objects and musical instruments on a table (FIG. 8.55). These paintings brought out the continuity of Braque’s oeuvre—it was, after all, a theme he had returned to constantly from 1908 onward—but their clarity and restrained sensuousness emphasized also that, for this artist, painting was not a theoretical demonstration or a celebration of the modern but a pondered, meditative engagement with the poetics of representation, informed by a long line of predecessors, including Paul Cézanne, Camille Corot, and Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin.

At the 1929 exhibition of the Paul Guillaume collection, the sequence of paintings by Derain was one of the principal revelations. The artist was famous and his work highly prized, but unlike Picasso, Braque, or Matisse, he had not held an exhibition in Paris since the war. This accorded with his declared disenchantment with the art world, with galleries where “yesterday’s friends are today’s enemies,” and with the self-doubt that spurred his engagement with the art of the past. These qualities, especially his traditionalism, were seen as central to his greatness by admirers like the writer Elie Faure, who called the artist’s search through the styles of the past a “powerful drama” and a sign of his maturity, engendered by the experience of the war.⁵¹ *Harlequin and Pierrot* (FIG. 8.56), the largest of thirty-one



8.56 (opposite)
André Derain (1880–1954)
Harlequin and Pierrot, c. 1924
Oil on canvas, 68⁷/₈ x 68⁷/₈ in.
(175 x 175 cm)
Musée de l’Orangerie;
Walter/Guillaume Collection

8.57 (above)
Chaim Soutine (1893–1943)
Page Boy at Maxim’s, c. 1927
Oil on canvas, 60¹/₄ x 26 in.
(153 x 66 cm)
Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo,
New York; Edmund Hayes Fund

paintings by Derain in Guillaume's 1929 exhibition, is the most deliberate and powerful expression of his craft and philosophy in the postwar years. With its harsh tones, barren landscape, and awkward melancholy clowns, the painting draws on seventeenth-century models and concepts to present an emblematic image of silence and the tragicomedy of life.⁵² It exemplified the return to order in French art through its engagement with the European painting tradition, its allegorical theme, and its monumental and highly finished quality. Yet its reflective, troubling character also suggests why Breton, early in the 1920s, found Derain so fascinating and why, in *Les Pas perdus* (1924; The lost steps), he placed an account of Derain's ideas between texts on Ernst and de Chirico.

The critic and dealer Adolphe Basler treated the Guillaume exhibition as a confrontation between Derain, Matisse, and Picasso, the acknowledged stars of modern art. The author of *Le Cafard après la fête*

ou l'esthétisme d'aujourd'hui (1929; Blues after the party, or today's aestheticism), a disillusioned attack on the pretensions of modern art, Basler disapproved of Picasso's stylistic acrobatics and claimed that the work of the two French artists completely overshadowed his. Derain and Matisse offered a contrast between gravity, force, and measure, on the one hand, and voluptuous charm on the other — in the end, for Basler, they shared the honors.⁵³ Although Matisse had been living and working mainly in Nice since 1917, he remained an important presence in the Parisian art world, as an influence on younger painters and as the most widely appreciated of all established modernists. His exhibitions at Bernheim-Jeune in the 1920s and the retrospective organized at the Galerie Georges Petit in 1931 were major events: the first established him as the quintessential purveyor of refined bourgeois pleasure for the contemporary audience in Paris, and the second confirmed, through a comprehensive survey of his

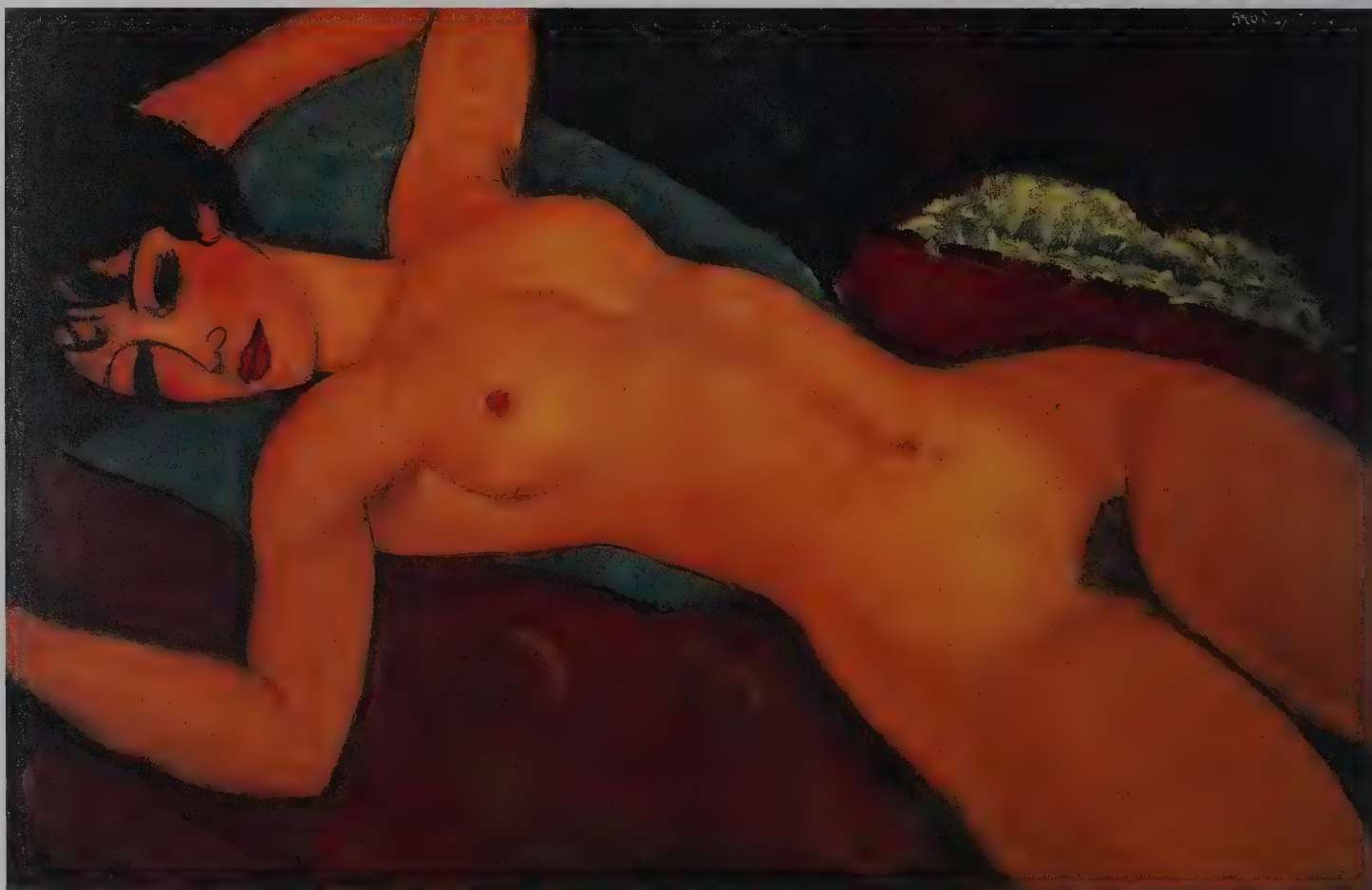
8.58

Amedeo Modigliani
(1884–1920)

*Reclining Nude on
a Cushion*, 1917–18

Oil on canvas,
23⁵/₈ x 36¹/₄ in.
(60 x 92 cm)

Mattioli Collection,
Milan





8.59

Tamara de Lempicka
(1898–1980)

Portrait of a Man
(Tadeusz de Lempicka),
1928

Oil on canvas,
51 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 31 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(130 x 81 cm)

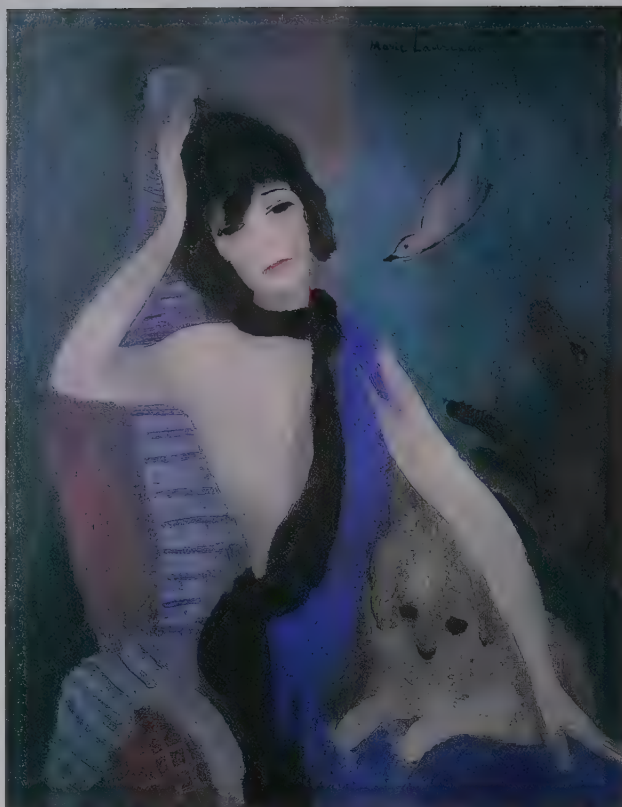
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

8.60

Marie Laurencin
(1883–1956)

*Portrait of Coco
(Gabrielle) Chanel, 1923*

Oil on canvas, 36³/₁₆ x
28¹¹/₁₆ in. (92.7 x 73 cm)
Musée de l'Orangerie;
Walter/Guillaume
Collection



career, his status as a key figure in the history of modern art. Although in the 1930s Matisse reintroduced into his work some of the dramatic play between abstract colored form and figuration that had characterized his paintings of 1910–16—for example, in the first version of the mural *Dance*, made for Albert Barnes (see FIG. 8.46), which was acquired by the city of Paris in 1937—he was no longer a difficult artist, and his work was accepted by a self-consciously modern public. Its vitality and hedonism, at least in the 1920s, had a ready constituency; its delicacy and subtlety were easily assim-

ilated, like the elegance and wit in Raoul Dufy's painting, to a concept of French taste as the quintessence of elegance and refinement, with its natural home in Paris. Matisse had become the most famous French painter of the age, the critic and curator Jean Cassou explained in 1935, because his hard-earned lucidity and purity had relaxed, without losing integrity, to generate "delicious images, true adornments of the life of our epoch."⁵⁴

The Purists combated the concept of art as an expression of personality, but the current practice of the leading artists of the prewar generation, the mainstream of critical interpretation, and general public taste were all against them. The rapid improvement after 1918 in the fortunes of artists associated with the School of Paris was due in part to the widespread enthusiasm for painting that used the technical and formal freedoms promoted by the modern tradition to produce images that seemed infused with the distinctive sensibility of an individual artist. Modigliani, the "martyr" of this cosmopolitan and eclectic school, made paintings and sculpture that were imbued with a sensual grace and pathos (FIG. 8.58). They demonstrated his acute awareness of aspects of a modernist style, including its use of sources such as Cézanne, oriental and African art, and early Italian painting. But they could also be read in terms of Modigliani's self-consciously bohemian and ultimately tragic life. Francis Carco, by then a successful playwright and well-known collector, ended his 1927 memoirs with Modigliani's death in 1919, presenting it

8.61

Raoul Dufy (1877–1953)

*History of Electricity,
1937*

Mural
Musée d'Art Moderne
de la Ville de Paris

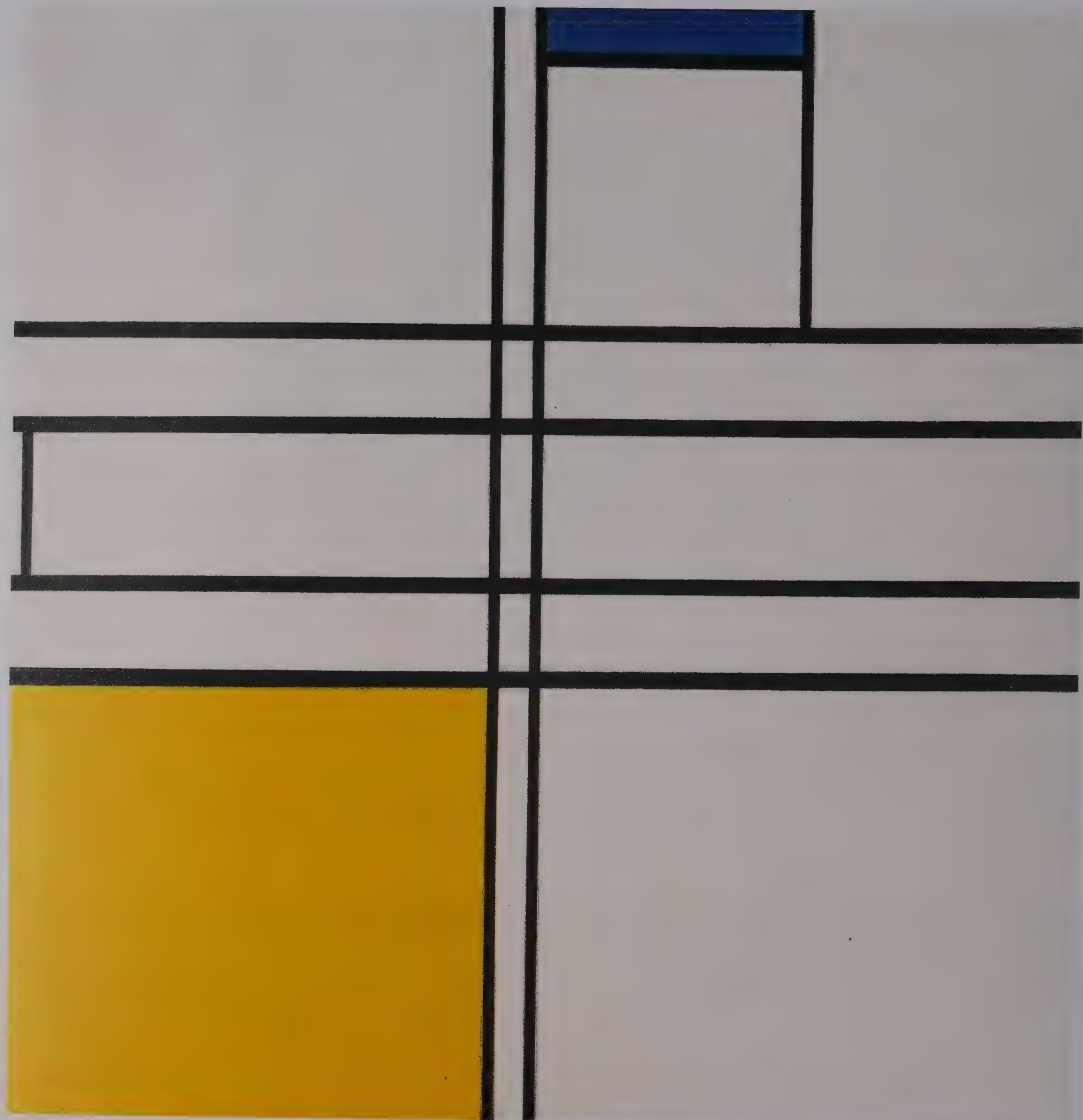


as a watershed in the history of independent art. The funeral cortège comprised a roster of the Parisian art community. Having spent most of his time in the city living hand to mouth, unknown to all but a few art lovers, Modigliani achieved consecration only in death. "It was Picasso, as always, who brought out the significance of the scene. Turning to me and indicating the coffin in which Modigliani lay under the flowers, then the saluting police, he said quietly, You see . . . he is avenged."⁵⁵

The sense of a life lived on the margins, its intensity directly translated into art, was a common feature cited in appreciations of the School of Paris (reinforced in the case of Modigliani and Jules Pascin [see FIG. 8.39], in particular, by the heady eroticism of much of their work). The intense color and almost caricatural distortion of the human figure that characterized Soutine's painting (FIG. 8.57) spoke eloquently of a lonely, troubled man with an instinctive sympathy for the poor and marginal, for whom painting was a compulsive act of "sensual objectification," of "expression at any price."⁵⁶ Critics also related these features of Soutine's work to his Jewishness. The School of Paris was frequently thought to have a distinctive Semitic character, particularly by those who believed that immigrant artists were endangering the quality of French art, and critical discussion of this issue intensified as Paris moved from frenetic boom to slump and accompanying political crisis.

By the mid-1920s the critical and commercial success of modern art in Paris had as its center of gravity the acceptance by the informed public, and increasingly, by the establishment, of the general principles of individual artistic freedom that had informed the prewar avant-gardes; at the same time, the leading figures of those movements had apparently renounced the more extreme versions of their initiatives. One feature of the interwar period, consequently, was the existence of an artistic *juste milieu*, or middle ground, whose borders were defined by Picasso's stylistic daring, Derain's historicism, Matisse's refined sensuality, and Soutine's expressive pathos. Vauxcelles was the most characteristic voice of this mainstream, in his hatred of academicism, his demand that art should engage with the visible world, his receptivity to individual artistic temperament, and his dislike of experiment for its own sake. Art that flourished in this setting included Raoul Dufy's whimsical, delicate compositions, Marie Laurencin's formulaic but poignant female portraits (FIG. 8.60), Marc Chagall's animated if somewhat saccharine fantasies, and the heavy, sensual painting of Tamara de Lempicka (FIG. 8.59), so in tune with the hedonistic culture of Parisian high society. The witty and elegant illustrations produced by Georges Lepape (see FIG. 7.116), Charles Martin, and others for *La Gazette du bon ton* and similar fashion journals of the time were an echo of the same tendency in the world of graphic design.





8.62

Piet Mondrian (1872–1944)

Composition in White, Blue, and Yellow, c. 1936

Oil on canvas, 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (72 x 69 cm)

Private collection, Switzerland



8.63

Joaquín Torres-García (1874–1944)

Structure in Colors, 1930

Oil on linen, 24 x 19⁵/₈ in. (61 x 50 cm)

Private collection

8.64

Francis Picabia
(1879–1953)

Toothpicks, 1925

Oil and collage (toothpicks, string, straw) on canvas, 36 1/16 x 28 5/8 in. (92 x 73 cm)
Kunsthaus, Zurich

The new avant-gardes that were to refuse this consensual, eclectic aesthetic first emerged in the immediate postwar period. Léonce Rosenberg extended his patronage in the early 1920s to Mondrian and other De Stijl artists, to the discomfort of some others in his stable. Neo-Plasticism, the rigorous form of abstract art developed by Mondrian at this time, presented Cubism as a legacy justifying an art based on pure form. At exactly the same moment, the Paris Dada movement exploited aspects of Cubism, notably collage, to challenge the whole concept of artistic value. Dada's successor in Paris, Surrealism, cited painting as a "lamentable

expedient" whose object was not pure aesthetic pleasure, or abstract truth, but the subversive freeing of the creative faculties from all a priori constraints.

In the summer of 1919 Mondrian returned to Paris, having spent the war years in Holland. Over the next nineteen years his presence and example were central to the fostering of an abstract school in Paris—a slow and often difficult process that finally gathered momentum at the end of the 1920s. Léonce Rosenberg's support in 1920 and 1921—he published Mondrian's first major essay, "Le Néo-Plasticisme," and included him in the 1921 exhibition *Les Maîtres du Cubisme*—may have suggested that abstraction would be rapidly taken up in Paris. However, this was not the case. Nonfiguration had, of course, been discussed and practiced in Paris before the war, but only very few French artists—Albert Gleizes was one, Auguste Herbin became another—persisted in this direction after it. In the context of French aesthetic theory and criticism of the time, the association of geometric abstract form with the decorative arts was too strong for it to be readily accepted as the basis of autonomous works of art, even by those favorably disposed to modernism. Léger, who had flirted with abstraction in 1913–14 and who remained constantly alert to avant-garde ideas, developed a theory that limited nonfigurative art to site-specific murals. For him, it was valuable within an architectural framework, but not in isolation.

The Purists, whose aesthetic was based on geometric abstract forms, explicitly distanced themselves from Mondrian's example. For them, as for Gris, art depended on the combination and interaction of abstract form and figurative reference; without the latter, it became both incomprehensible and fundamentally unbalanced. The state of the Parisian art market in 1921–22 and the momentum of the return to order also discouraged experiments with abstraction. Mondrian wrote to the architect J. P. Oud (a fellow member of the De Stijl group) in 1921 that he was considering giving up the struggle in Paris: "None of us artists are selling any more. All good artists are retreating: they are making compromises."⁵⁷ For several years, in fact, Mondrian produced flower paintings in order to survive. Nevertheless, as awareness of developments in Holland and central Europe grew in the Parisian art community, more and more young artists were attracted to the



concept of a “constructive” art, based on geometric form without the constraints of figuration. Several of Léger’s students at the Académie Moderne, including Florence Henri and Franciska Clausen, experimented with abstraction, despite his reservations. Both of them took part, as did Léger himself, in the 1925 exhibition *L’Art d’aujourd’hui* (Art today). This show, held in rented premises on the rue la Ville-L’Evêque in the smart eighth arrondissement, was organized by Victor Poznansky with the support of Gleizes to promote the concept of “non-imitative plastic art.” By no means was all of the art in this exhibition nonfigurative; however, the

inclusion of Mondrian, Theo van Doesburg (the animator of De Stijl, now also resident in Paris), and other leading representatives of the international constructive tendency was an important step in establishing this type of radical practice on the Parisian scene.

Within four years, abstract art had sufficient adepts to allow the organization of the group Cercle et Carré (circle and square) by Michel Seuphor and Joaquín Torres-García and a more radical and restricted rival, Art Concret (concrete art) by van Doesburg. Seuphor claimed that Cercle et Carré had around eighty adherents, half in Paris and half abroad. An exhibition

8.65

René Magritte
(1898–1967)

*At the Threshold of
Liberty*, 1930

Oil on canvas, 45 1/4 x
57 1/2 in. (114 x 146 cm)
Museum Boymans–van
Beuningen, Rotterdam







held by the group in a rented gallery on the rue La Boétie in the spring of 1930 brought together work by forty-six artists, including Jean Arp, Wassily Kandinsky, Léger, Mondrian, Ozenfant, and Georges Vantongerloo. The demise of both groups in 1931 led to the foundation of the association Abstraction-Création, in which approximately one hundred artists participated between 1931 and 1936. Paris now became the international center for constructive art, a position that was reinforced after the Nazi takeover in Germany led to the condemnation and persecution of modern art there.

According to Seuphor, Mondrian enjoyed the animation of Cercle et Carré meetings, in a café in the sixth arrondissement, but remained detached from their often overexcited debates. In the development of the abstract art movement in Paris, Mondrian held a unique position as pioneer, theorist, and exemplar. Throughout the 1920s he had remained remarkably consistent in both his ideas and his practice. The compositional principles of Neo-Plasticism, based on the use of black orthogonal lines to delimit planes of primary colors, white, and gray

(FIG. 8.62), remained unchanged in his work throughout the interwar period; only the restrained use of rhythmic linear repetition, introduced in the 1930s, brought a slight change of aspect to some of his paintings. The Theosophical echoes of Mondrian's early writing faded, but his fundamental ideas on the nature of visual art remained the same: art linked the individual with the universal by expressing the immutable law of "dynamic equilibrium." In 1925 he broke with van Doesburg and De Stijl because he believed that, although architecture, sculpture, and painting would function together in the future to generate abstract environments, he was anxious to preserve, for the present, the experimental autonomy of painting. His position and practice were identical ten years later. This constancy and rigor earned Mondrian general respect—many artists found it inspirational. His studio at 26 rue du Départ, near the Montparnasse railway station, became a place of pilgrimage. The English painter Ben Nicholson, who visited in 1934, compared it to "one of those hermits' caves where lions used to go to have thorns taken out of their paws."⁵⁸ "When I had knocked on the door and Mondrian opened it," the artist Jean Gorin recalled, "I was astounded to see a man who was so simple and modest. Then came the revelation of his studio, his spiritual universe. An unforgettable moment for me since it had already decided my entire artistic career."⁵⁹

Seuphor introduced Torres-García to Mondrian immediately after meeting the Uruguayan artist in 1929, and the entire period of organization of Cercle et Carré was marked by Mondrian's example. At the time of



8.66 (opposite)

André Masson
(1896–1987)

The Four Elements,
1923–24

Oil on canvas,
28 3/4 x 23 7/8 in.

(73 x 60 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

8.67 (left)

Marcel Duchamp
(1887–1968)

*Ready-Made, 50 cc of
Paris Air*, 1919

Glass, 5 1/4 x 2 1/2 in.
(13.3 x 6.35 cm)

Philadelphia Museum of
Art; Louise and Walter
Arensberg Collection

8.68

Luis Buñuel (1900–1983)
and Salvador Dalí
(1904–1989)

Film still from
Un Chien andalou
(*An Andalusian Dog*),
1929

Torres-García's activity as joint animator of the group, his own work showed an effort to conform to the reductive clarity of the Neo-Plastic ideal (FIG. 8.63). But he was not entirely won over to this discipline. "One can achieve something that is precise—Mondrian. And after that? Nothing more, finished," he wrote to Gorin in October 1930.⁶⁰ His paintings in later years combined a rigid formal structure with symbolic content inspired by primitive and archaic art. This mix reflected, as did his earlier uneasiness with Mondrian's work, an interest in some of the ideas associated with Surrealism. For even though many abstract artists, including Seuphor, saw Surrealism as *the* enemy, in reality the gulf between these two avant-gardes was not always as wide as they would have wished.

In the first years of the Dada "movement" in Zurich, impersonal nonfigurative art had been presented as a form of visual expression that possessed both aesthetic and moral value, in contrast with conventional painting and sculpture. In Germany and Holland in the early

1920s, there were numerous links between proponents of abstract "constructive" art and manifestations of Dada.⁶¹ When Dada erupted on the Parisian scene in 1920, however, connections between it and the abstract tendency in art appeared minimal. Paris Dada was born from the encounter between a group of ambitious young French poets—André Breton, Louis Aragon, and Philippe Soupault—and two of the protagonists of Dada in Zurich, its joint founder Tristan Tzara and the charismatic globe-trotting French painter (and writer) Francis Picabia. In New York in 1916 and 1917, Picabia had developed with his friend Marcel Duchamp an iconoclastic, ironic "antiaesthetic," through which the pretensions of art, including "advanced" art, were cruelly parodied. Picabia had infected Dada with this mood when he met Tzara in Zurich in 1918. When Tzara himself moved to Paris in January 1920 (having been much awaited) and met Breton and his friends, Paris Dada developed in a similar spirit of provocation. In his letters to Tzara in 1919, after his own return to

8.69

Salvador Dalí
(1904–1989)

Illumined Pleasures,
1929

Oil and collage on
composition board,
9⅞ x 13¼ in.

(23.8 x 34.7 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; Sidney
and Harriet Janis
Collection





Paris, Picabia had indicted Parisian artists for their vanity and complacency: "If you only knew how tedious life is among all these Artists whose only dream is of academic glory." As if to send up the idea of Paris's uniqueness as an art center, Duchamp, returning to New York in 1919, brought with him as a present for his friends Louise and Walter Arensberg an ampoule of "air de Paris" (FIG. 8.67). To create this "readymade," he had simply asked a Parisian pharmacist to empty the serum contained in a glass vessel and to seal it again. "This is the precious ampoule of fifty cubic centimeters of AIR OF PARIS, I brought back to the Arensbergs in 1919," he explained.⁶²

The Dadaists set up their center of operations at the Café Certà in the passage de l'Opéra, Aragon recalled, "through hatred of Montparnasse and Montmartre."⁶³ In March 1920 Picabia's review 391 published a "tableau Dada" by Duchamp—a reproduction of the Mona Lisa with a mustache and the incendiary inscription *LHOOQ* (She has a hot ass)—and, on the following page, his own violent ink splash blasphemously labeled "The Holy Virgin." At the Salon d'Automne of 1921 he

entered *The Cacodylatic Eye* (under the title *Les Yeux chauds* [Hot eyes]; FIG. 8.40), a "painting" made up of inscriptions by his friends and acquaintances—a joke at the expense of conventional notions of style and authorship. *Cure dents* (Toothpicks; FIG. 8.64) of 1923 was one of a series of paintings that mocked established genres—still life, in this case—as well as the avant-garde practice of collage. Jacques Doucet added to the work's ironic status by commissioning a luxury frame for it by Pierre Legrain.

Early in 1922 Tzara and Picabia maintained the negativism of Dada by their refusal to take seriously the project, initiated by Breton, of holding a congress to determine the nature of the modern spirit. This incident effectively marked the end of the Dada movement in Paris. The period of reflection and adjustment that ensued among the group of writers around Breton, undertaken through meetings in cafés and in his apartment on the rue Fontaine just south of Pigalle, culminated in the publication of the First Surrealist Manifesto in 1924 and the appearance of a new review, *La Révolution surréaliste*. Dada had mocked the pretensions of high

8.70

André Breton
(1896–1966)

I See, I Imagine
(*Poem Object*), 1935

Collage

12¼ x 14 in.

(31 x 35.6 cm)

Scottish National
Gallery of Modern Art,
Edinburgh





culture and refused to elaborate a program. Surrealism was based on the premise that certain aspects of the “modern spirit”—its adherence to total freedom of expression and its desire to reveal interior states of being—could be used to make creative activity a revolutionary force in society.

In their approach to visual art, the Surrealists focused on the power of images to astonish the viewer and excite the imagination. Purely stylistic or aesthetic issues were of no concern to them. When asked by Jacques Doucet (his employer) to explain why the *Demoiselles d'Avignon* (see FIG. 7.101) was such a key work in the history of modern art, Breton did not describe it as the first step in the invention of Cubism but as a poetic masterpiece, “the wall in front of which have passed Rimbaud, Lautréamont, Jarry, Apollinaire,” and as an example of pure inspiration.⁶⁴ Artists attracted to the Surrealist circle felt similarly about the need to exploit the expressive power of visual signs and to reject the idea that only formal qualities were important in a work of art. “We were all caught up in the desire to get

beyond the ‘plastic integrity’ of Cubism. The knife immobilized on the cubist table would be seized at last,” André Masson recalled to William S. Rubin. “I remember Miró’s remark to me at the time: ‘I will break their guitar.’”⁶⁵ One of Masson’s first efforts in this vein, the painting *The Four Elements* (FIG. 8.66), was bought by Breton as soon as he saw it at the Galerie Simon.

In 1925, having taken over the direction of the review *La Révolution surréaliste*, Breton embarked on a series of articles entitled “Le Surréalisme et la peinture” in which he paid homage to those artists, led by Picasso, who had successfully undermined the comfortable notion of external reality and transformed their work into a window onto an “inner model.” In an extraordinary series of works executed between 1919 and 1924 (first in collages that Breton and Paul Eluard brought to Paris for an exhibition at their publishers Au Sans Pareil in the avenue Kléber in May 1921, then in a group of paintings culminating in *Two Children Threatened by a Nightingale* of 1924), Max Ernst provided a pioneering example of how this could be done by

8.71 (opposite)

Joan Miró (1893–1983)

The Birth of the World, 1925

Oil on canvas,
8 ft. 2¼ in. x 6 ft. 6¼ in.
(2.50 x 2.00 m)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York; acquired through an anonymous fund, the Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Slifka and Armand G. Erpf Funds, and by gift of the artist

8.72 (above)

Jean Arp (1886–1966)

Human Concretion, 1934

Plaster, 13¾ x 16½ x 13⅞ in.
(35 x 42 x 34 cm)

Arp Foundation, Clamart

8.73

Aristide Maillol
(1861–1944)

*La Méditerranée, or
La Pensée*, 1923–29

Marble, height: 43½ in.;
length: 46¼ in.; depth:
26⅞ in. (110.5 x 117.5 x
68.5 cm)

Tuileries Gardens

manipulating simple images from different sources to create startling effects. This adaptation of collage, inspired by Lautréamont's famous phrase "beautiful like the chance encounter of an umbrella and a sewing machine on a dissecting table," created a model for Surrealist art that many artists influenced by the movement adapted to their own purposes. The Belgian painter René Magritte, who spent 1927–30 in Paris, perfected a mode of painting in which the bland representation of ordinary scenes and objects was rendered strange through combination, context, and omission (FIG. 8.65).

The young Spaniard Salvador Dalí, who became a central figure in the Parisian Surrealist group in 1929 (through the brilliance and intensity of his art and personality and the impact of his whirlwind romance with Gala, Eluard's wife and Ernst's ex-mistress-muse), adapted the collage principle to the representation, influenced by his knowledge of Sigmund Freud's

theories, of symbolic material based on his childhood phobias, using a meticulous academic technique.

Un Chien andalou—the film he made that year with Luis Buñuel, which caused a sensation when it was screened at the Studio Ursulines in June—used the illusionistic power of the camera to heighten the sense of the extraordinary and the absurd generated by the kaleidoscopic sequence of shots (FIG. 8.68). In *Illuminated Pleasures* (FIG. 8.69), Dalí juxtaposed a bewildering range of images from his personal stock of symbolic material; they include a lion's head, a female "jug," his own profile derived from a rock formation, a threatening bloodied knife, and a figure from Ernst's great "oedipal" painting, *Pietà or the Revolution by Night* (owned at the time by Paul Eluard, now in the Tate Gallery, London). Together, they create an overall sense of both dislocation and threat—feelings Dalí attributed, no doubt rightly, to his own neurotic condition of extreme sexual anxiety.



For the Surrealists there was no autonomous artistic sphere and no privileged, limited access to the creative imagination. Pursuing the idea that the marvelous transforming power of the irrational should erupt into ordinary life, in 1931 Dalí proposed the concept of the Surrealist object, an assemblage of found elements chosen according to the unconscious desires of its maker.

Form, métier, and aesthetic purpose were irrelevant; all that counted was the symbolic power of the work.⁶⁶ At the end of *Nadja* (1928), Breton had declared that “beauty will be convulsive or nothing.” In *Les Vases communicants* (1932; Communicating vessels) he considered the suggestive force of the Surrealist object, taking as example one that he had imagined himself, combining a sealed envelope and the word *silence*. “This is indeed a poetic object, with value or not in terms of poetic imagery and no other,” he commented. The “object-poem” now became a feature of his own work, combining in an allusive, dislocating way the verbal and the visual, the found and the written (FIG. 8.70).⁶⁷

For critics such as Maurice Raynal, such works epitomized the harmful influence of Surrealism on art. By subordinating the visual sign to theories and attitudes based in language, it worked against art’s essence, which lay in plastic values. In very different ways, Dalí, Ernst, and Magritte shared a disdain for the formalist aesthetic precepts underpinning such critical views. Not all painters in the Surrealist orbit, however, were so forthright in their revolt. Both Masson and Miró, although they were attracted by the notion of embodying intense poetic ideas in painting and by the possibilities of “automatism”—the technique of spontaneous composition “without control exercised by reason” that Breton had declared to be the key to Surrealism—as a means

8.74 (below, left)

Jacques Lipchitz
(1891–1973)

Half Standing Figure,
1915

Limestone, 38½ x 11 x 7 in.
(98 x 28 x 18 cm)

Tate Gallery, London;
purchased with assistance
from the Friends of the
Tate Gallery, Mrs. Jack
Steinberg, and the Rayne
Foundation 1892

8.75 (below, right)

Jacques Lipchitz
(1891–1973)

*Reclining Woman with
Guitar*, 1928

White stone, 39¾ x 21¼ x
17⅓ in. (100 x 55 x 45 cm)
Kunsthaus, Zurich



for realizing them, remained very attentive to formal problems in their work. In *Le Surréalisme et la peinture* Breton expressed reservations over Miró's lyricism. Although paintings made at the height of Miró's association with the Surrealist circle, including *The Birth of the World* (FIG. 8.71) of 1925, incorporated some automatic procedures, they were in fact carefully crafted and composed, exploiting a type of pictorial space that derived, albeit in a novel way, from late Cubism. And they were, indeed, abstractions whose figurative content was often minimal. It was in this area of nongeometric, organic form that the categorical distinction, bandied about in Parisian avant-garde circles, between Concrete and Surrealist art became blurred. Both the work and the ideas of Jean Arp exemplified this. Arp, with his wife, Sophie Taeuber, was a pioneer of nonfigurative art. They had promoted it in the context of the nascent Dada movement in Zurich in 1915–17, and in the late 1920s (having moved to Paris in 1927) they were closely involved in founding Abstraction-Création. However, Arp was opposed to the doctrinaire positions adopted by some of his colleagues. He remained receptive to some of the work and ideas of the Surrealists, particularly concerning the role of the unconscious in creative activity. His own sculpture at this time became increasingly organic, while retaining the playfulness that had always been a feature of his work (FIG. 8.72). This form of abstract art, which did not aspire to geometric purity

8.77 (far right)
Alberto Giacometti
(1901–1966)
The Cage, 1930–31
Wood,
19¼ x 10½ x 10½ in.
(49 x 26.5 x 26.5 cm)
Moderna Museet,
Stockholm



that eliminated nature and the transient, became an important current in international modern art; in due course, during the 1940s, it would be a major influence on the nascent New York School.

Parisian sculpture between the wars reflected many of the currents in painting: late Cubism, abstract art, and Surrealism all influenced young sculptors, while a mainstream employed less-challenging figurative styles. The specific conditions of the sculpture medium—the expense of its materials and techniques, its association with the monumental—made this a fairly lean time for sculptors. Throughout the 1920s, of course, there was a steady supply of work producing war monuments, but this did not allow for great originality and was often affected by budget constraints. Modern interior decoration continued to allow a place for sculpture, but modern trends in architecture did not seem to favor it. The organizers of the 1937 exposition sought to use the occasion to promote the practice of linking monumental sculpture to architecture, inspired by the example of the Musée des Colonies, which had been constructed at the Vincennes fair in 1931 with sculptural decoration

8.76
Alberto Giacometti
(1901–1966)
Woman, 1928–29
Marble,
13⅜ x 12⅜ x 3⅜ in.
(33.5 x 31 x 9 cm)
Alberto Giacometti
Foundation, Zurich



by Alfred Janniot. For the 1937 project, Janniot was commissioned to decorate the west sides of the new museums, on the theme of *Les Muses et la Légende*, as part of an overall project involving this site and the Palais de Chaillot at the Trocadéro. Fifty-seven sculptors were commissioned to embellish the latter—with mixed results, as observers at the time noted. In fact, the sculptural aspect of the exposition was one in which the conservative trends of the times were most apparent, both in terms of a general attachment to traditional approaches and of the harnessing of these to an authoritarian usage of art and architecture.

Aristide Maillol's marble version of his classical goddess *La Méditerranée* (FIG. 8.73) had been installed in the Tuileries gardens at the end of the 1920s. Sixty of the venerable French Catalan artist's works were included in the *Maîtres de l'art indépendant* exhibition organized for the 1937 exposition; he represented, with Charles Despiau and Antoine Bourdelle (see FIG. 8.35), a tradition of modern figurative sculpture that found increasing establishment support during this period. Maillol's classical style embodied, for his admirers, qualities that they identified with an essential Latin core of French cultural identity. More radical initiatives in sculptural practice could not expect such approval. Lipchitz's monumental *Prometheus*, produced for the exposition's display on scientific achievement at the Palais de la Découverte, was removed after a right-wing press



8.78

Galerie Ratton
Installation view of
Exhibition Surrealiste
d'Objets, May 1936

campaign denigrated it as unaesthetic and un-French. The expressive style of the *Prometheus* was the most recent stage in Lipchitz's development. As a young sculptor during the war, part of the community of east European immigrants (he was a Lithuanian Jew from Smolensk) living in Montparnasse, he had experimented with a rigorous Cubist style influenced by Gris (FIG. 8.74). During the 1920s he had achieved some recognition as a thoughtful and energetic modernist who combined formal daring with a traditional emphasis on the human figure (FIG. 8.75).

Lipchitz's evolution exemplified one type of engagement with and resolution of the relation between sculpture and avant-garde notions of artistic form and



8.79

Meret Oppenheim
(1913–1985)

*Object (Le Déjeuner en
fourrure)*, 1936

Fur-covered cup, saucer,
and spoon; cup: $4\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(10.9 cm) diameter,
saucer: $9\frac{1}{8}$ in. (23.7 cm)
diameter, spoon: 8 in.
(20.2 cm) long, overall
 $2\frac{7}{8}$ in. (7.3 cm) high
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York



8.80

Constantin Brancusi
(1876–1957)

View of the Artist's Studio,
c. 1925

Original photographic print,
11¼ x 9⅜ in. (29.8 x 23.8 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre Georges
Pompidou

representation. Alberto Giacometti's exemplified another, which showed the influence of both the abstract tendency of the 1920s and of Surrealism. Giacometti, also an immigrant artist (from Switzerland), after several years of studying with Bourdelle decided in 1927 to stay and make his career in Paris. He later described his artistic situation at this time: "I tried to make the little I could in the light of this catastrophe [of accurate depiction]. . . . After numerous experiments that related to Cubism—one had to engage with it (that's too long to explain now)—this led to some objects that constituted for me the closest I could get to my vision of reality."⁶⁸ Giacometti was striving to combine his urge to make expressive figurative sculpture with modernist ideas of sculptural form, influenced by Cubism and by an admiration for African and archaic art. *Woman* (FIG. 8.76) was one of the pieces he was referring to. It is dramatically abstract, a plain slab of marble carved in relief, with two simple, evocative forms. As in a painting by Miró, understanding how this object embodies the subject indicated by the title demands an imaginative effort from the viewer that, once made, gives the work great poetic presence.

Gazing Head was exhibited at the Galerie Jeanne Bucher in 1928 and attracted considerable attention. As a result, Giacometti met Michel Leiris and others in the Surrealist circle, including Masson and Georges Bataille. His work changed dramatically. His new friends encouraged him to discard notions of sculptural purity and to try to render his own inner drives and fears in symbolic form. Between 1928 and 1934 Giacometti produced a series of works that deployed striking new techniques of representation and that addressed the drama of sexual relations—sometimes allusively, sometimes very directly, and often generating a sense of unease and violence. In *The Cage* (FIG. 8.77), for example, the body-like forms imprisoned by the frame appear to be engaged in erotic combat; the juxtaposition of hard and soft, flat and sharp, rounded and rectilinear elements exudes a sense of aggression and unease. Dalí cited another piece in this series in his discussion of Surrealist objects, as a model of the "symbolically functioning object" that "already presented and combined all the essential principles of our definition but that remained confined to sculptural means."⁶⁹ Giacometti himself never entirely abandoned the concern for sculptural



8.81

Constantin Brancusi
(1876–1957)

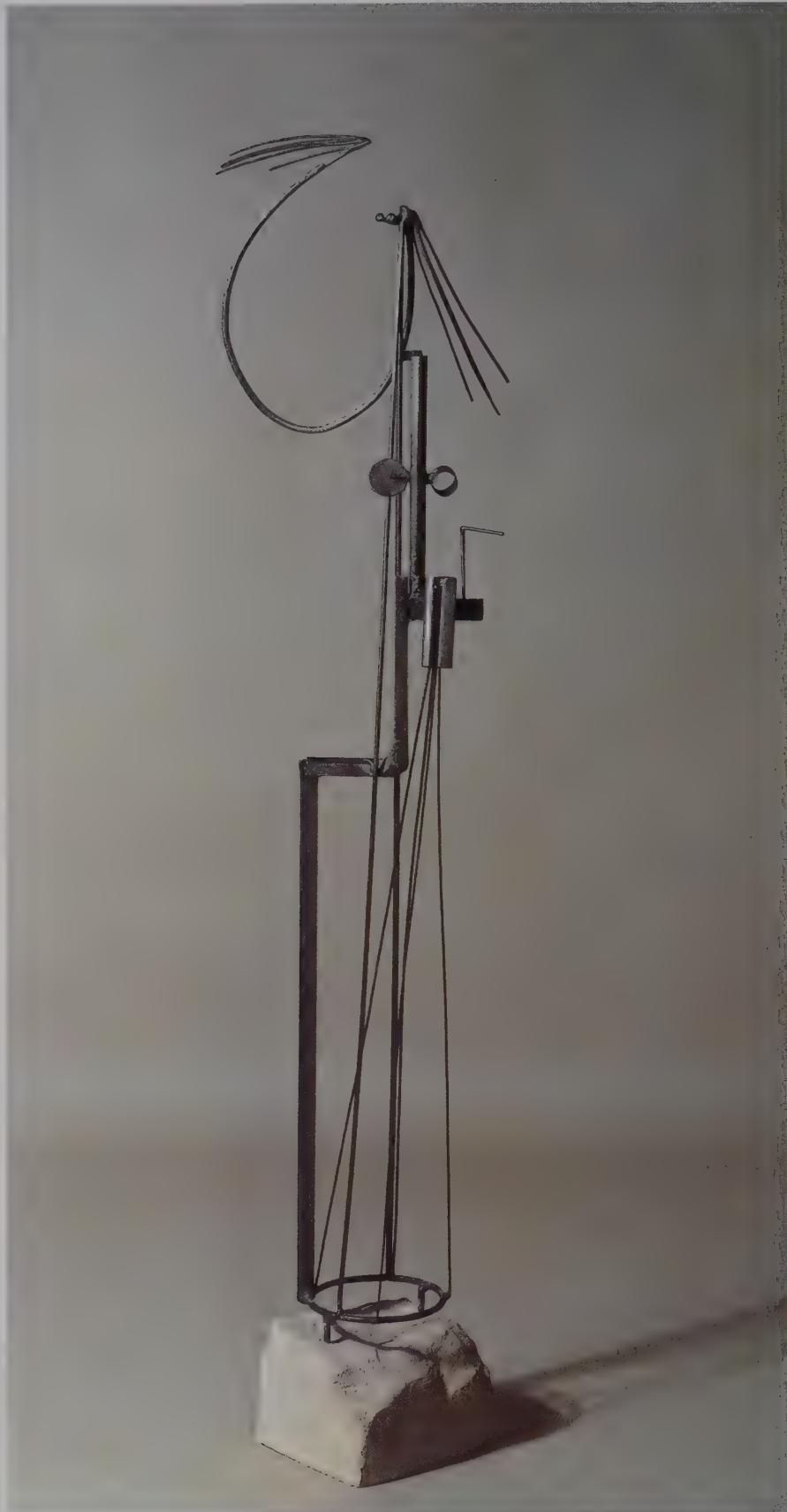
Bird in Space, 1925

Marble, stone, and
wood, height:

71³/₈ x 18¹/₂ x 18¹/₂ in.

(181.9 x 47 x 47 cm)

National Gallery of Art,
Washington, D.C.;
gift of Eugene and
Agnes E. Meyer



form and technique that Dalí perceived as a confinement. Others, however, went further. An exhibition of Surrealist objects organized by Charles Ratton, a dealer in primitive art, in his apartment on the rue de Marignan in 1936 (FIG. 8.78) brought together Cubist collages and sculpture, African and Oceanic artifacts, and pieces by members of the Surrealist circle; it included objects that were truly nonsculptural in Dalí's sense and that could be described convincingly, in Dalí's phrase, as emanating entirely from their maker's "amorous imagination" as a form of perverse fetishism. Meret Oppenheim's fur-covered teacup, saucer, and spoon (FIG. 8.79) were conceived in this spirit: hard, utilitarian objects are transformed into disturbing, useless, sexually evocative ones through a brilliant application of Lautréamont's slogan. Oppenheim's extraordinary economy of means gives the ensemble a strong formal presence that reinforces its poetic qualities.

The Surrealist object constituted a deliberate defiance of the notion of sculpture as an art form with a distinctive identity derived from its engagement with specific materials and with aesthetic issues of composition and representation in three dimensions. It was precisely this traditional notion that lay at the core of Constantin Brancusi's work, although he gave it a very personal, and modern, inflection. Brancusi had begun his career in Paris before the war as an advocate of direct carving, a return to the roots of sculptural practice. In the postwar years much of his output was cast in bronze, but he maintained an artistic posture of solitary personal engagement with his materials. His work centered on a few forms and themes that he constantly refined in a way that implied a belief in a perfect, ultimate solution, close to but just avoiding complete abstraction. His image of a bird taking flight had first been developed in his *Maiastrea* of about 1912 (see FIG. 7.100); there followed a series of *Birds in Space* (FIG. 8.81), in which the original reference became more and more attenuated, to the point that the concept was conveyed entirely by the elongated mass of the piece, swelling slightly in its upper section and launched forward into the air from a short tapering base. The mise en scène of these pieces by the artist in his own photographs of them emphasized their mysterious qualities; they are shown gleaming in the dark of the studio as though possessed of some inner light,

strange unworldly presences amid the mundane clutter of his working environment.

In some respects Brancusi epitomized the Parisian artist of his time: foreign (from Romania) but at home in Montparnasse; a bohemian in the sense of remaining an outsider to bourgeois society; an uncompromising devotee of his art, which he conceived as a personal quest and obsession, answerable only to his own conscience. The site of this quest was his studio. Brancusi moved to 8, impasse Ronsin, off the rue de Vaugirard, in 1916. In 1928 he relocated his studio to number 11, impasse Ronsin, which he gradually enlarged by adding adjacent rooms until it ultimately included distinct work, living, and exhibition spaces, and he remained there until his death in 1957. He presided over and organized this space with great care: it was, as it were, a temple to his art (FIG. 8.80).

In 1933 Picasso made a series of etchings representing a sculptor's studio. They were variations on one of his favorite themes, the tripartite relationship of artist, model, and work of art. He had taken up sculpture again in 1928 when, with the help of the Spanish metal-smith Julio González, he had realized a number of welded-metal pieces. They demonstrated a new type of interaction between materials and the space they occupied and indicated the potential of assembling found and cut metal elements in a three-dimensional version of collage. González himself went on to exploit this approach in elegant and stylish figure constructions such as *Maternity* (FIG. 8.82). In the early 1930s, Picasso moved in another direction. He was now modeling in a traditional fashion but with startling results, as he experimented with depictions of the body based on archaic and primitive models and analogies with the vegetable and animal worlds. He produced a series of heads inspired by his mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter in which her distinctive, physiognomy was exaggerated and stylized (as it was in his painting and etching of the time) to give her a "classical" hieratic but also sensual presence, a powerful embodiment of the feminine "other" that so obsessed the artist (FIG. 8.83). Picasso's ability to switch styles and medium, to innovate in all the traditional areas of art making—as exemplified by his excursions into sculpture—while maintaining the identity "Picasso," was a central feature of the legendary status he increasingly enjoyed. With his

relentless creativity, his success, and his ability to inhabit both the world of high society and that of intellectual and artistic bohemia, Picasso did dominate the art scene of Paris. And in some senses he embodied it. This remained true during the difficult period that followed the golden years of the 1920s.



8.82 (opposite)
Julio González
(1876–1942)
Maternity, c. 1934
Welded cast iron,
51 3/4 x 16 x 9 1/4 in.
(130.5 x 41 x 23.5 cm)
Tate Gallery, London

8.83
Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)
Head of a Woman, 1932
Bronze,
30 1/4 x 16 1/2 x 17 1/8 in.
(77 x 42 x 43.5 cm)
Musée Picasso

THE MODERN HABITAT

You are tired at last of this old world
o shepherd Eiffel Tower the flock of bridges bleats at the morning
You have had enough of life in this Greek and Roman antiquity

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE, "ZONE," 1912⁷⁰

Apollinaire had been at the forefront of the drive to modernize culture before World War I. Tragically, having survived the head wound he suffered on active service, he died of influenza at the very moment the conflict came to an end. He was therefore unable to enjoy in peacetime the prestige he had acquired both as a poet and as a pioneering defender of modernism in the arts. During the war, responding to the prevalent nationalist ideology of the time, he had called on French writers to assert those classical values of order and measure represented by the French, Latin, tradition. This was not a renunciation of modernity, however. The message of his lecture "L'Esprit nouveau et les poètes" (Poets and the new spirit) was that the age of the machine, the airplane, the record player, and the cinema offered great new opportunities that poets should seize, armed with the innate sense of clarity and restraint provided by the classical spirit, which "is, above all, a sublime expression of that nation [the French]."⁷¹ His vision, with its combination of radicalism and a sense of the past, its openness and attachment to a national identity, found many echoes in Parisian culture during the interwar years.

In the trenches Léger dreamed of Paris. "How I'll gobble Paris up, if I'm lucky enough to go back there! I'll fill my pockets with it, and my eyes."⁷² When he was finally released from the army in 1918 and returned to work in the city, Léger did indeed make it central to his work. Picking up themes that had existed in his painting since 1912, he renewed the concept of simultaneity as a defining characteristic of modern life, experienced above all in the metropolis. *The City* (FIG. 8.84) incorporates all his excitement and optimism about Paris in the immediate postwar years, as well as the techniques he developed to convey these emotions. Fragmentation, dynamic contrasts of form and color, the forceful interaction of figurative and abstract elements, shapes and signs evoking billboards, and stylized





8.84

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

The City, 1919

Oil on canvas,
93 x 120¼ in.
(236.5 x 305.5 cm)
Philadelphia Museum of
Art; Louise and Walter
Arensberg Collection

mechanical figures are all combined to construct a dazzling, aestheticized vision of modern urban life, characterized by the clash of multiple sensations, the dominance of mechanical form, and the fusion of man with the man-made environment—the “new man” of the postwar era.

Where was such a man to live? Léger collaborated in formulating an imaginary answer to this question in 1923 when he designed the sets for the engineer's laboratory in Marcel l'Herbier's film *L'Inhumaine*. Here the modern man, devoted to the rational pursuit of progress, developed his projects surrounded by the sharp, matter-of-fact planes and disks of Léger's dynamic formal syntax. The modern woman, meanwhile, whom he desires, inhabits a vast, sumptuously furnished villa (FIG. 8.85), which is equally modern but softer and more luxurious, determined by a principle of pleasure rather than one of progress. Both conceptions of modernity—the ascetic, rational, “masculine” one and the sensual, decorative, “feminine” one—were realized in

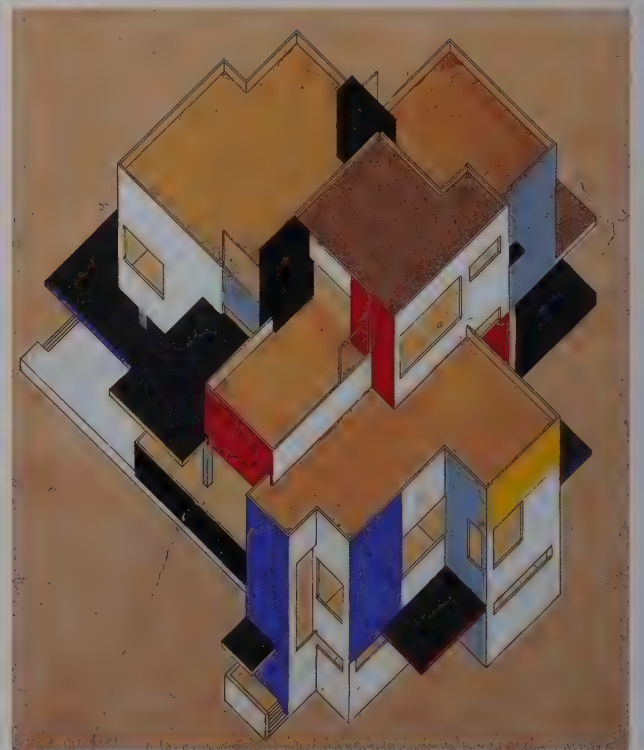
real houses built in Paris during this period.

In 1920 Léger's dealer, Léonce Rosenberg, wished to commission a villa appropriate to his role as impresario of “the modern effort” and proposed the project to Theo van Doesburg and the De Stijl group. At first both J. P. Oud and Piet Mondrian were involved; in due course, as divergences among the three developed (linked, in Oud's case, to the fact that for financial reasons the villa quickly became an ideal rather than a practical notion), they dropped out. Van Doesburg recruited a young Dutch architect, Cornelis van Eesteren, to collaborate with him; the result was a centerpiece in the form of a model (FIG. 8.86) at the exhibition of De Stijl architecture held at the Galerie de l'Effort Moderne in November 1923. A grand domestic space is conceived here as a construction of colored planes, organized asymmetrically with as little acknowledgment as possible of the normal constraints of building. Rooms are the product of intersecting rectangular surfaces, whose materiality is countered by the application of primary colors, which creates powerful visual contrasts across the whole. Like Léger's laboratory, this was a vision of the modern environment from which not only the past but also the natural was eliminated—a home for the energetic,

8.85 (right)
Marcel l'Herbier
(1888–1979), director,
Robert Mallet-Stevens
(1886–1945), designer
View of the alcove of the
boudoir in the film
L'Inhumaine, 1924



8.86 (far right)
Théo van Doesburg
(1882–1931) and
Cornelius van Eesteren
(1897–1988) with Gerrit
Rietveld (1888–1964)
Axionometric study for a
private house, 1922





purposeful man dedicated to the future, interested not in comfort but in intellectual stimulus and the uncompromising realization of new aesthetic principles.

The houses that Le Corbusier and his brother began to build in the early 1920s had some of these qualities. In essays in the review *L'Esprit nouveau*, Corbusier argued that beauty lay in rational abstract order and that the modern equivalent of the perfection of the Parthenon lay in buildings and products that obeyed the logic of the machine. He conceived houses that were simple geometric volumes determined by a system of "perfect" ratios, employing modern materials and emulating the functional character of industrial buildings. The house he designed on the avenue Reille for his colleague Ozenfant in 1922 was a plain cubic shape with a serrated roof (FIG. 8.87). Reinforced concrete supports allowed the walls to be non-load-bearing: this was exploited by installing a vast corner window that flooded the studio area with light. The overall effect was of rational order,

8.87

Le Corbusier
(Charles-Edouard
Jeanneret) (1887–1965),
and Pierre Jeanneret
(1896–1967)
Façade, Villa Ozenfant,
1922



8.88

Charles-Edouard
Jeanneret, known as
Le Corbusier (1887–1965),
and Pierre Jeanneret
(1896–1967)
Villa La Roche-Villa
Jeanneret, 1923



8.89
 Adolf Loos (1870–1933)
 Façade, Tristan Tzara
 House, 15 Avenue Juniot,
 1926–27

an austere “masculine” conception of domestic space.

The Villa Savoye, Corbusier’s most important domestic commission of the period (in Poissy, one of the small localities west of the city that modern Paris was swallowing up), is dramatic in its geometric simplicity. Concrete *pilotis* (pilings) elevate the main volume above the ground, and its sharp horizontal form creates a powerful contrast to the undulating lines of the natural world around it. Open to the air and fields, the building nonetheless suggests the dominating force of human technology. Van Doesburg and Mondrian employed color to counteract the materiality of the wall. Le Corbusier wanted plain walls free of decoration. He did, unlike the De Stijl artists, employ circular forms, sparingly but effectively. In the Villa Savoye they provide elements of

contrast that ease the severity of the interior. In the Villa La Roche (FIG. 8.88), built for his Swiss patron Raoul La Roche in a quiet corner of the sixteenth arrondissement, the long wall of the picture gallery, with a narrow strip window at the top, is curved. In the interior this wall bears a ramp leading to the first-floor level; the end result is a room of great elegance, which provided a highly appropriate frame for La Roche’s collection of Cubist and Purist works of art.

These buildings helped to establish Le Corbusier’s reputation in Paris. His work in the capital, along with that of Robert Mallet-Stevens, constituted the most distinctive Parisian modernist architecture of the interwar period—ideological but often inspired in Le Corbusier’s case, grandly stylish in Mallet-Stevens’s.

8.90

Pierre Chareau
(1883–1950)
Façade, Maison de Verre,
rue Saint Guillaume,
1928–31





8.91 (above, left)

Alberto Giacometti (1901–1966) and Diego Giacometti (1902–1985) for Jean-Michel Frank (1895–1941)

Lamp with the Head of a Woman, c. 1937

Bronze with gold and brown patina, height: 20 1/8 in. (51 cm)
Giacometti Foundation, Zurich

8.92 (above, right)

Louis Cartier (1847–1942)

Pendulum, 1927

Jade, onyx, coral, gold, 12 x 7 1/2 x 4 3/8 in. (30.5 x 19 x 11 cm)
Musée des Arts Décoratifs

8.93 (right)

Jacques-Émile Ruhlmann (1879–1933)

Cabinet decorated with a marquetry basket of flowers, c. 1925

Macassar, ebony, rosewood, and ivory, height: 50 1/4 in. (127.6 cm)
The Metropolitan Museum of Art; Edward C. Moore, Jr. Gift Fund, 1925

In the late 1920s two other particularly elegant solutions to the design problem of the modern town house were built in the center of Paris, by Adolf Loos and Pierre Chareau. Loos, a leading figure of prewar Viennese modernism, was commissioned by the poet Tristan Tzara and his wife to build a house on the avenue Junot, on the western edge of Montmartre, in 1926 (FIG. 8.89). Loos was an advocate of a rational, “virile” architecture, but he was not interested in the concepts of mechanical standardization or functionalism. The house is a complex arrangement of rooms on five floors (including utility rooms and a rental apartment), in which the organization of interior space and the composition of the exterior are treated as virtually independent entities. The main facade is a striking formal essay in three dimensions. The symmetrical ordering of the windows around a sharp central axis reinforces the vertical emphasis of the whole, while in the upper, “noble” section of the house the calm weight of the square plaster facade is dramatically modulated by the oblong recessed terrace. At ground level a further discreet note of difference is added by the diagonal orientation of the entrance doors.

The house that Chareau designed for his friends and patrons Dr. Jean Dalsace and his wife, Anna (née Bernheim), in 1928 was remarkable in its originality and daring—all the more so since this *Maison de Verre* (Glass house) had to be inserted beneath the top floors of the original eighteenth-century *hôtel* (FIG. 8.90). Chareau and his collaborator Bernard Bijvoët started from preconceptions concerning the spatial and formal freedom provided by modern materials similar to those

held by other modernist architects of the time, but their application of them was unprecedented. They produced a subtle, varied array of spaces within an armature of steel columns, clad on the exterior by translucent glass tiles. This was an ensemble, infused with light, that made no concessions to conventional ideas of structure or form, where partitions largely replaced normal walls, where the materials and style of industrial architecture were successfully and wittily domesticated.

Chareau was essentially a furniture designer, and the furnishings of the Dalsace house were an integral part of



the design and a key element in its charm. The built-in wardrobes, bathroom fittings, and bookshelves mediated effectively between the rigid metallic framework of the house and the elegant, pliant character of the furniture. Here, at least, the tension between the modernist space and the modern interior, between the demands of a pure modern aesthetic and the craving for luxury, appeared to be satisfactorily resolved. Chareau, like Mallet-Stevens, was one of those designers who, without renouncing conventional interests in finish and the decorative use of materials, was most sensitive to the call for a radical approach to design that emerged in the 1920s. In contrast, the main trends in French interior design since the

war had lain between the opulent if refined historicism exemplified by the work of Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann (FIG. 8.93) and modernized versions of the integrated design aesthetic of Art Nouveau. Louis Süe and André Mare's *Compagnie des Arts Français*, founded in 1919, was very successful during the 1920s with products of the latter kind (FIG. 8.94). The undulating organic forms that characterized Art Nouveau were replaced by the sharp lines and volumes of a post-Cubist style, but signs of a reductive and mechanized approach to design were absent. Furniture and accessories (FIG. 8.92) were conceived as works of art, and the interior that housed them was used as a complementary, enhancing frame.

8.94

Louis Süe (1875–1968) and André Mare (1887–1932) (*La Compagnie des Arts Français*, founded in 1919) Dining room for M. and Mme Pierre Girod, c. 1922 Wood, stucco, glass, bronze Musée des Arts Décoratifs



8.95

Eileen Gray (1879–1976)

Transat chair, c. 1927

Leather on black
lacquered frame

Private collection



It was this approach to the interior that Le Corbusier polemically attacked in the Pavillon de l'Esprit Nouveau at the 1925 fair (see FIG. 8.23). Eventually, in 1929, the differences between modernists and the established association of artist-decorators led to the founding of the Union des Artistes Modernes, of which Mallet-Stevens was the first president.

The work of Eileen Gray in this period offers an interesting reflection of these different currents in con-

temporary design practice. This young Englishwoman, who had settled in Paris in 1907, built up a successful business as an interior designer after the war by combining her expertise in lacquer work with a modern geometric style (FIG. 8.96). After 1924, in conjunction with the architectural critic Jean Badovici, she evolved toward a reductive, functionalist approach, albeit one tempered by a continuing interest in the sensual qualities of materials, as the different versions of her “transat” chair illustrate (FIG. 8.95).

The older design tradition retained its dominance in the marketplace nonetheless. It was to the fore in the showcase interiors designed for the ocean liner *Normandie*, which entered service in 1935. Le Corbusier had cited the modern liner as an example of the classic beauty created by technology, but marketing savvy required that such a ship become a vehicle for fantastic luxury, a floating palace. The abiding taste of the rich for comfort and opulent display is also evident in the work of the Parisian society designer Jean-Michel Frank in the 1930s. The salon that Frank designed for the Paris town house of the vicomte and vicomtesse de Noailles was based on simple, classic forms, but it was also a dazzling display of rich materials and craftsmanship that

8.96

Eileen Gray (1879–1976)

Large screen, 1922–25

Black and silver lacquer
with geometric design,
each leaf: 81 ½ x 21 ¼ in.
(207 x 54 cm), overall:
81 ½ x 170 in. (207 x
432 cm)

Victoria and Albert
Museum, London



celebrated the traditional craft values of the artist-decorator and not those of the modern “constructor.” Frank’s employment of the Giacometti brothers to design interior fittings (FIG. 8.91) was characteristic of the flair he brought to sustaining and renewing this tradition, to which Diego Giacometti, in due course, made a personal contribution of great distinction and charm.

In the Voisin Plan (see FIG. 8.24), Le Corbusier had presented a grandiose vision of a renovated, “reconstructed” Paris, subjugated to the logic of mass production and to a rational, geometric ordering of space. However, planning and rebuilding on this scale simply did not happen in Paris *intra muros* during this period. A grand design for the redevelopment of the Porte Maillot and the construction of a “triumphal way” from the Arc de Triomphe to La Défense, the subject of two competitions in 1929 and 1931, was purely conjectural from the outset. Shortage of funds and lack of political will meant that actual development in the city was piecemeal. As economic conditions improved from the mid-1920s until the slump of the early 1930s, extensive private development did take place in the upmarket residential sector, particularly in and around Montparnasse and in the sixteenth arrondissement. One of the princi-

pal beneficiaries of this activity, the architect Michel Roux-Spitz, argued (in 1943) that during this period a School of Paris emerged in modern architecture that combined the functional and technologically advanced approach of international modernism with an elegance and classicism that were characteristically French. His own buildings, with plain stone facades organized symmetrically around bow ribbon windows, employed a restrained version of the modern style that was highly appreciated by a bourgeois clientele. Pierre Patout’s imposing “liner” apartment block on the boulevard Victor (so-called because its silhouette resembled that of a luxury ship; FIG. 8.97) and Mallet-Stevens’s street of private houses in the sixteenth arrondissement (FIG. 8.98) were more daring applications of a similar aesthetic.

8.97 (below, left)

Pierre Patout
(1879–1965)

Block of flats,
3–5 boulevard Victor
1929–35

8.98 (below, right)

Robert Mallet-Stevens
(1886–1945)

Apartment house,
rue Mallet-Stevens,
1926–27



A commission of 1930 to design a Pavillon Suisse (FIG. 8.102) for the new Cité Universitaire in the fourteenth arrondissement allowed Le Corbusier to put into practice, on a small scale, his ideas for modern mass housing. He designed a prototype apartment block with non-load-bearing walls raised on *pilotis* that integrated the building with the surrounding park. The roof, as in his later *unités d'habitation* (living units), was used as a solarium and garden. The Cité Universitaire—a complex of residences mainly for foreign students in Paris, inaugurated in 1925 (and now a fascinating anthology of midcentury architectural styles)—used land made available by the demolition of the nineteenth-century fortifications and the release to the city in 1919 of the “Zone non ædificandi” (a “building-free zone” originally part of the city’s defenses) beyond them. This acquisition provided a unique opportunity for integrated development that the city was unable to capitalize on. However, chiefly through the Office Public, the Paris housing authority founded in 1914, several thousand low- and medium-rent apartments were built on these peripheral lots over the interwar years. Unlike

Le Corbusier’s Pavillon Suisse, these were not manifesto modernist buildings but schemes that combined economy and high density with touches of the homely, usually provided through the partly decorative use of brick. Although a few major projects reflected the influence of international modernism—most notably André Lurçat’s school buildings for the Communist-controlled commune of Villejuif of 1933—the dominant style of public architecture in the expanding Parisian suburbs in the interwar years was similar to that used in these housing projects. Whereas the clean lines and plain surfaces of Patout’s apartment block in the fifteenth arrondissement signified taste and discreet comfort for the well-to-do, Alexandre Maistrasse created an entirely new community of subsidized housing, the Cité-Jardins (garden city) of Suresnes, a western suburb (FIG. 8.110). Maistrasse combined brick cladding and a low-rise design to provide approximately 10,000 inhabitants of modest income with a reassuring image of domesticity in the face of the alienating, industrial city—another side of Paris very far from its celebrated role as world center of art, entertainment, and style.



8.99

Le Corbusier
(Charles-Edouard
Jeanneret) (1887–1965)
Pavillon Suisse, Cité
Universitaire, 1930–32
Fondation Le Corbusier,
Paris



8.100

Alexandre Maistrasse
(1860–1951)

Block of flats,
La Cité-Jardins de
Suresnes, 1921–29

ENTERTAINMENT, SPECTACLE, AND ADORNMENT



At the end of Jean Cocteau's film *Le Sang d'un poète* (*Blood of a Poet*), the poet shoots himself in front of two boxes at a theater. We, the viewers, view the audience, a group of elegantly dressed men and women. As originally filmed, these included members of the Parisian coterie Cocteau had cultivated and charmed over the previous fifteen years, an aristocratic elite who had patronized much modern art and design since the war. One of them, the vicomte de Noailles, had paid for the film (and had it reshot without himself and friends after he saw they were being shown applauding a suicide). Spectacle played a central role in the cultural life of the capital, in the ballet, theater, and film, and also as a component of social life, the self-display of the rich and famous. The film director Jean Renoir (son of the painter) placed a private theatrical divertissement at the center of his comedy of manners, *La Règle du jeu* (*The Rules of the Game*) (1939). Social events such as the comte de Beaumont's extravagant fancy-dress balls and evenings at the nightclub

Le Boeuf sur le Toit, where Cocteau acted as unofficial master of ceremonies, similarly merged the public and private, the theatrical and the real.

Costumes in Renoir's film were by the Maison Chanel. Haute couture, one of Paris's most important and distinctive industries de luxe, was an essential accessory for life in high society and consequently enjoyed a symbiotic relationship with the arts of spectacle. Christine, wife of the marquis de Chesnay in *La Règle du jeu*, appears at home in outfits of cool but grand extravagance (FIG. 8.102), set off by the neat black uniform of her maid. Paul Poiret had established an image of feminine modernity before the war. He dispensed with the corset to allow women's bodies greater freedom of movement and expression, embellished by a wide variety of richly decorated fabrics. This extravagant look retained its appeal in the interwar years, although Poiret's own business failed. His sister Nicole Groult successfully pursued her own variant of his approach, making clothes with clear, simple lines enlivened by

8.101

Jean Cocteau
(1889–1963)

Le Sang d'un poète
(*The Blood of a Poet*),
1930



8.102 (far left)

Jean Renoir (1894–1979) and Coco (Gabrielle) Chanel (1883–1971)

Nora Grégor in a Chanel dress with Mila Parély in *The Rules of the Game*, (Jean Renoir, 1937)

8.103 (left)

Nicole Groult (T-K)

Trefle Noir day dress, 1928

Crepe printed with black trefoils on a white background

Musée de la Mode et de la Costume, Palais Galliera

8.104 (below)

Sonia Delaunay (1885–1979)

Sport Coats, 1925

an intricate and sensual use of color, texture, and decoration (FIG. 8.103). Sonia Delaunay, a painter turned designer, envisaged a modern style of clothing that adapted the sharp, abstract forms of modern art to dress—and an automobile (FIG. 8.104). Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel’s modernity, which became a central force in Paris fashion during this period, was less dramatic and more linked to the traditional values of haute couture—the effective exploitation of fabrics through skillful cutting and meticulous sewing. She made knitwear and tartan fashionable and, in line with the taste for the classical in the Cocteau circle, created clothes (frequently in black) that impressed through their elegant restraint. The opposition, in the 1930s, between her style and that of Elsa Schiaparelli, which treated the female body as a support for elaborate fantasy, recapitulated in terms of fashion the conflict in art between “pure plastic values” and the transgressive forces of Surrealism.

Chanel’s costumes for Diaghilev’s ballet *Le Train bleu* included examples of smart sportswear, a type of clothing generated by the contemporary fad for outdoor leisure activities, which this ballet itself invokes. The sets for *Le Train bleu* were by the sculptor Henri Laurens. Throughout the 1920s Diaghilev commissioned designs for his Ballets Russes from prominent



8.105

Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)

Curtain design for Erik
Satie's ballet *Mercury*
or *Music*, c. 1924

Tempera on canvas,
157½ x 196⅞ in.
(400 x 500 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

members of the Parisian art world, including Braque, Derain, Gris, Laurencin, and, on five occasions, Picasso. Ballet at this time was still associated with the cultivated and extravagant lifestyle of the aristocracy. Through his patronage Diaghilev helped to make contemporary art part of fashionable high culture. In return, the artists, writers, and composers with whom he collaborated invigorated his company's repertoire and helped adapt the ballet form to modern artistic thinking. *Parade* (which the Ballets Russes successfully revived in 1920, three years after its première) was the great exemplar

in this respect (FIGS. 8.8 and 8.9). Cocteau, the librettist/ author, and Picasso produced accessible, witty versions of the fragmentary, abstract character of avant-garde art and literature; Erik Satie wrote a delicate, playful modern score. In 1927 Picasso and Satie collaborated again on another ballet—*Mercury* (FIG. 8.105), written and directed by the Ballets Russes dancer Léonard Massine in the season *Les Soirées de Paris* sponsored by Etienne de Beaumont—and Cocteau wrote the libretto for *Le Train bleu*. Between 1920 and 1925, however, the experimental vein opened up by *Parade*





was mined most effectively by another company, the Ballets Suédois, based at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. The producer and backer of this company, Rolf de Maré, was an active collector of contemporary art, which forcefully marked his venture. Léger designed sets twice for the Ballets Suédois; the American painter Gerald Murphy worked on *Within the Quota*, which had music by Cole Porter; and Picabia collaborated on *Relâche*, with music by Satie and an “entr’acte” in the form of a now-celebrated short film by René Clair.

In 1923 the Ballets Suédois presented *La Création du monde*, a ballet that enacted a creation story from an anthology of African legends published by Blaise Cendrars in 1921.⁷³ Darius Milhaud wrote the score, and Léger designed the sets and costumes (FIG. 8.106). In some respects *La Création du monde* was, like *Parade*, a “Cubist” ballet. It employed abstract forms, depersonalized the dancers, and denaturalized their dance. It made very explicit the debt of modern art to African statuary and in so doing reinforced the selective reading of the latter in primarily formal terms, which was characteristic of the period. It also reflected and contributed to the popularity in Paris of black culture,

ranging from West African art to American jazz. *L’art nègre*, promoted by Paul Guillaume and bought by wealthy collectors such as the stockbroker André Lefèvre and the beautiful English writer and socialite Nancy Cunard, became fashionable in the 1920s. Jazz, associated with dancing and pleasure, was taken up by Parisians as a democratic, quintessentially modern form of expression. Another high point of this fashion was the overnight success of the *Revue Nègre*, which opened in 1925 at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées, starring the American dancer Josephine Baker (who famously danced naked in the opening sequence; FIG. 8.107). The effect was recalled by Janet Flanner, who began her famous series of “Letters from Paris” for the *New Yorker* at this time: “She was an unforgettable ebony statue. A scream of salutation spread through the theater . . . the acute response of the white masculine audience in the capital of hedonism of all Europe.”⁷⁴ Both the formal aesthetic reading of black art and its identification, by a white French audience, with the exotic sexual “other” were brilliantly encapsulated in Man Ray’s photograph *Black and White* (FIG. 8.108), in which the head of his model (and lover) Kiki is

8.106A (above, left),
8.106B (above, right)

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

Costume studies for
the Ballet Suedois’s
production of Blaise
Cendrars’s *The Creation
of the World*, 1923

Gouache and pencil on
paper, 16¹³/₁₆ x 22⁵/₈ in.
(42.7 x 57.5 cm.) and
12⁷/₁₆ x 9⁷/₁₆ in.
(31.5 x 24 cm.),
respectively

Musée National Fernand
Léger, Biot, France



8.107

Paul Colin (1892–1985)

Poster for "La Revue
nègre," 1927

Lithograph, 67 x 49¼ in.
(170 x 125 cm)

Musée de la Publicité

mirrored by a Baule mask.

Producers of ballet accepted its position as an elite art form. Theater had a more varied identity—as a popular distraction, a purveyor of the classics, and potentially, a site of avant-garde experiment. Commercial theater for the urban middle classes—the so-called boulevard theater, named after its typical location on the main thoroughfares of the city—had flowered at the end of the nineteenth century. Although it did not have the same vitality during the postwar period, it remained a major force in the Parisian entertainment industry, sustaining in the person of the actor and author Sacha Guitry at least one truly outstanding and distinctive talent. This was theater as middle-class diversion, based on sexual intrigue and verbal wit. It did not aspire either to the grandeur of classical drama or to radicalism of form or content. Nonetheless, Marcel Pagnol's play *Topaze*, presented at the famous old Théâtre des Variétés

on the boulevard Montmartre in 1928 (and followed by his Marseilles trilogy *Marius*, *Fanny*, and *César*), showed that the genre could be adapted successfully to present tragicomedies of contemporary life—even if this type of drama was even better suited to the cinema, as subsequent adaptations of Pagnol's work demonstrated.

In February 1920 the former director of *La Nouvelle Revue française*, Jacques Copeau, reopened the Théâtre du Vieux Colombier with a production of Shakespeare's *A Winter's Tale*. His project of renewing and reforming Parisian theater, initiated in 1913, had been interrupted by the war. The Vieux Colombier closed again in 1924, and Copeau left Paris, but his legacy dominated serious theater in the capital for many years afterward. Of the four actor-directors—Gaston Baty, Charles Dullin, Louis Jouvet, and Georges Pitoëff—who constituted themselves as a "Cartel" in 1927 in view of their common interests and allegiances, two (Dullin and Jouvet)

8.108

Man Ray (Emmanuel Rudnitsky) (1890–1976)

Black and White, 1926

Silver print on tissue,
8 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.

(21.9. x 27.7 cm)

Man Ray Trust,
Hicksville, New York





8.109 (above, top)

Louis Jouvet and M. Ozeray in *Ondine* at the Théâtre de l'Athénée, 1939



8.110 (above)

Scene from Georges Pitoëff's production of Luigi Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author*, 1923

had worked with Copeau before the war, and a shared commitment to his high standards was a central feature of the agreement among the four.

The members of the Cartel brought very distinct talents and ideas to the theater. Baty, for example, had expressionist and mystical tendencies; Jouvet emphasized analysis and interpretation of the text. But they shared basic concepts of the theater—above all, a belief in the medium as a major art form. They wanted serious theater, based on a full exploitation of the medium within a traditional framework. Imaginative set design, innovative direction, and intelligent, empathetic acting were all key elements in this. So was a dual engagement, to the classics on one hand and to serious contemporary work on the other. The former meant, among others, Shakespeare and Molière. The latter included Henri Lenormand, Luigi Pirandello, and Jean Giraudoux. Dullin was the first French director to put on a Pirandello play; Pitoëff became a friend of the Italian dramatist after interpreting *Six Characters in Search of an Author* in 1923 (FIG. 8.110), in a production that launched Pirandello's international reputation. Jouvet established a rapport with Giraudoux in 1928 when he presented *Siegfried* and worked closely with him on several later productions, including the 1939 *Ondine* (FIG. 8.109). Pirandello's *Six Characters* posed fundamental questions about the nature of human identity; in Giraudoux's *Ondine*, a characteristic mix of the marvelous and the prosaic, the mermaid of the title must also struggle with her identity, a theme foreshadowing the explicitly existential focus of the postwar French theater. In contrast to the experimental and politicized theater of central and eastern Europe during this period, what this Parisian "school" offered was drama that was both entertaining and thought-provoking, intellectual as well as bourgeois, that combined skillful dramatic interpretation with highly crafted, complex texts. The Cartel helped to sustain a high theatrical tradition in Paris that has continued to the present day. Modern theater has also been influenced by a form of theatrical practice that was scarcely noticed when it was invented. Alfred Jarry had created a type of "anti" or "absurd" theater in 1896 with his play *Ubu Roi* (see FIG. 7.85). Although Jarry was a key influence on many avant-garde writers of the following generation, *Ubu Roi* was staged only five times between its creation and 1950.



Antonin Artaud, whose writings on theater are now venerated, produced hardly any actual drama, and his productions were criticized even by the literary avant-garde.

Apollinaire had coined the term *surréaliste* for his fantastic comic play *Les Mamelles de Tiresias* (Tiresias' tits) in 1918. However, most writers in the Dada and Surrealist circles were ambivalent about theater. Some examples of "antitheater" were performed during the Paris Dada phase, notably *Le Coeur à gaz* (The gas heart) by Tristan Tzara, presented at a Dada soirée in 1921.

Two years later, when it was performed by a professional group at the Théâtre Michel, Breton and his associates forcibly disrupted the performance. Breton and Aragon argued that while Surrealist drama was possible in theory, the commercial character of theater meant that any actual production was bound to be compromised. In 1926 Artaud founded the Théâtre Alfred Jarry with the writers Roger Vitrac and Robert Aron. Between June 1927 and December 1928 this association presented four programs, including two plays by Vitrac,

8.111

Antonin Artaud
(1896–1948)

Poster for Antonin Artaud's production of *Victor, ou Les Enfants au pouvoir* (Victor, or Children in Power), 1928

Lithograph
Bibliothèque Nationale de France



8.112

Antonin Artaud in his production of *Les Cenci*, with sets by Balthus, 1935



8.113 (above, top)

Jacques Feyder
(1888–1948)

Film still from *Pension Mimosas*, 1935



8.114 (above)

Abel Gance, 1889–1981

Film still from *La Roue* (*The Wheel*), 1923

Les Mystères de l'amour and *Victor, ou Les Enfants au pouvoir* (Victor or children in power; FIG. 8.111).

The first, originally published in 1924, the same year as the Surrealists' First Manifesto, attempted to destroy audience preconceptions of theater through an oneiric treatment of time, place, and identity and a celebration of "mad love." The second, written for the Théâtre Alfred Jarry, was a violent satire on the bourgeois family. Artaud and Vitrac had both participated in the invention of Surrealism. They subscribed to its libertarian and subversive goals in relation to art and life. In a typical act of high-mindedness, however, Breton accused them of sacrificing principles for expediency (putting on a play by August Strindberg) and literary notoriety, and he included them in the list of those deemed unworthy of the cause in the Second Manifesto of Surrealism (1929). Ironically enough, the Théâtre Alfred Jarry was not a commercial success. After it ceased activity at the end of 1928, Artaud multiplied his theoretical reflections on the theater in numerous articles that formed the basis of his famous text *Le Théâtre et son double* (Theater and its double), published in 1938, and also his attempts to put them into practice. He was able to do so only once, and then only partially, in his production of the "tragedy" *Les Cenci*, staged in 1935—with inevitable compromises in terms of staging and structure. *Les Cenci*, derived from writings by Percy Bysshe Shelley and Stendhal, is a violent story of incest and parricide. The production—which starred Lady Ilya Abdy (its backer), with music by Désormière and sets by the painter Balthus (FIG. 8.112)—was based on Artaud's concept of a "theater of cruelty." Using his own difficult experiences—which led to repeated stays in mental asylums—he sought to create a theater of extremes, through which the audience was forced to confront the violence and pain of human existence. To Artaud's disappointment, *Les Cenci* closed after seventeen presentations, and his grand project of a revolutionary "total" theater remained unrealized.

Film acting constituted an important source of income for Artaud during these years. He also wrote the screenplay for Germaine Dulac's experimental film *La Coquille et le clergyman* (The shell and the clergyman) in 1928. Cinema had been invented in Paris, and both the Parisian art community and its entertainment industry were eager to make a distinctive contribution



to the new medium. However, there were very specific problems to overcome, linked to the industrial nature of the product. Before 1914, Pathé Frères and Gaumont had been world leaders in the film industry. In the post-war era, challenged by foreign competition—above all, from the United States—and undermined by the fragile state of the economy, they lost this position, and both companies finally collapsed in the Depression era. In this area of the visual arts, therefore, Paris did not play a preeminent role. However, French cinema in the inter-war years showed considerable range and vitality, partly, in fact, because production was not dominated by one

or two large companies, as it had been earlier. Many “safe” popular films were made, but there were also opportunities for experiment on both a modest and a grand scale. *Entr’acte*, by René Clair, and *Un Chien andalou* (see FIG. 8.68), by Dalí and Buñuel, are examples of the former, related to Dada and Surrealism, respectively. Relatively cheap to make, these films were targeted at a small metropolitan audience.

In the 1920s the Paris-based directors Marcel L’Herbier and Abel Gance were able to organize the production of high-cost art films in French studios. Gance’s two major projects of this period, *La Roue*

8.115

Marcel Carné
(1909–1996)

Film still from *Hôtel du Nord*, 1938



8.116 (above, top)
Jean Vigo (1905–1934)
Film still from
L'Atalante, 1934

8.117 (above)
René Clair (1898–1981)
Film still from *Paris qui dort*, 1923

(The wheel; FIG. 8.114) and *Napoléon* (1927), were both conceived on a grand scale. The original version of *La Roue* lasted nine hours; *Napoléon*, which ran for six, was only the first part of Gance's planned scheme to depict Napoleon's entire career. Both films combine a dramatic narrative with a high level of formal experimentation. *La Roue* tells the story of an engine driver's tragic love for his adoptive daughter, employing powerful visual metaphors that incorporate sequences of rapid montage unprecedented in French film. *Napoléon*, which was basically a romantic historical epic, makes extensive use of superimposed images and includes sequences projected simultaneously on three screens. L'Herbier set up the company Cinégraphic in 1920 with the express purpose

of financing quality films using teams of modern specialists from different fields. The flawed masterpiece of this enterprise, *L'Inhumaine* (FIG. 8.85), a modern love story juxtaposing a young engineer and a new-style femme fatale, was based on a script by Pierre Mac Orlan, with a score by Darius Milhaud and sets by Mallet-Stevens, the set designer Alberto Cavalcanti, and Léger.

In 1929 Jacques Feyder, who had made, in *L'Atlantide* (1921) and *Craïnquebille* (1923), two of the most successful commercial films of the decade, left France for Hollywood. His departure reflected the fact that, despite its efforts and achievements, French cinema of the silent era had not succeeded in the new

worldwide cultural market. The introduction of sound then limited the universal character of the medium. The French cinema community was slow to respond to this new challenge, while American and German companies quickly set up production facilities in Paris to cater to the local market. However, although the industry remained economically troubled, a distinctive popular French cinema did develop in the 1930s, centered on a form of realism that built on the nation's rich literary and visual tradition in this vein. Feyder himself was important in this, having returned to France in 1933, disillusioned with the Hollywood machine. His *Pension Mimosas* (FIG. 8.113), which presented the theme of maternal love in a seedy urban context, was an early example of the realist tendency. His assistant Marcel Carné went on to become its leading exponent. *Le Quai des brumes* and *Le Jour se lève* (Day breaks), the two

films starring Jean Gabin that Carné made in 1938 and 1939 in collaboration with the poet Jacques Prévert, tell stories of individuals crushed by malignant social forces. They brilliantly create a grim vision of the world, in tune with the pessimistic mood of the times. The nature of contemporary society was also analyzed, with a lighter touch, in several early films by Jean Renoir, culminating in *La Règle du jeu* (see FIG. 8.102), which can be read as the depiction of a social order built on lies and bound to collapse.

The City Poetic: Paris as Motif in Film, Art, and Literature

Carné's 1938 film *Hôtel du Nord* (FIG. 8.115), starring Arletty and Louis Jouvet, opens on a scene of pessimistic



8.118

Irène Lagut (1893–1994)
Set design for the ballet
by Jean Cocteau, et al.,
*Les Mariés de la Tour
Eiffel*, 1921

The Dance Museum,
Stockholm



urban realism. Two young lovers take a room in a cheap hotel on the Canal Saint-Martin, with the intention of carrying out a suicide pact. But they are saved, through the incompetence and weakness of the boy and the girl's faith in love. The tragedy shifts to a "bad" couple, a prostitute (Arletty) and her pimp (Jouvet) living in the same hotel, and it ends with his death. The presentation is so stylized, however, that the fate of this small-time

crook neither moves us nor conveys a powerful social message. The hotel, microcosm of the city itself, is the site where the tragicomedy of life is played out, a place that is both tolerant and indifferent but animated by a basic warmth—the spirit of the people. This was a variant of an established literary vision of the city as a theater of life. The theme of Paris as seducer is part of the same tradition and was central to Jean Vigo's 1934

film *L'Atalante* (FIG. 8.116). The film contrasts the restricting world of the canals with the city as a mirage of pleasure. It is in the former—itsself, of course, part of the industrial infrastructure that is basic to urban reality—and not in the bars of Montmartre that the human virtues of love and solidarity are to be found, as the young wife discovers after her flight.

In keeping with the mood of the 1920s, René Clair's film *Paris qui dort* (Paris is sleeping; FIG. 8.117) had given a more lighthearted version of the metropolitan spectacle, using the Eiffel Tower as a focal point. Five characters who have arrived by airplane find the inhabitants of Paris paralyzed by the ray gun of a mad inventor, thus allowing them to inspect, and plunder, the lives of their fellow citizens. But, ensconced as a precaution on the top of the Eiffel Tower, they re-create in microcosm the flawed society at their feet.

The tower itself, once a disputed symbol of modernity, has become by now the established symbol of a city that had—as Robert Delaunay first suggested in his painting of 1912 (see FIG. 7.152)—stylishly woven the ultramodern into its historical fabric. In 1921 Cocteau, with typical flair for the topical, used the concept of the Eiffel-Tower-as-Paris as the basis for his comic ballet *Les Mariés de la Tour Eiffel* (The newlyweds of the Eiffel Tower). The sets and costumes by Irène Lagut and Jean Hugo (FIG. 8.118) evoked—as a section of Delaunay's painting had done—the work of Henri Rousseau, whose success, initially with the avant-garde and now on the art market, derived partly from his being seen as an authentic artistic representative of ordinary Parisians. Delaunay, still committed to modernity, retained the Eiffel Tower as a central motif in his postwar work (FIG. 8.119). Dufy in 1934 used it as an emblematic

8.119 (opposite)

Robert Delaunay
(1885–1941)

Triomphe de Paris, 1929

Gouache on card,
28¹³/₁₆ x 37¹/₂ in.
(73.2 x 95.4 cm)
Formerly Charles
Delaunay Collection,
Paris



8.120

Marc Chagall
(1887–1985)

*Bride and Groom with
Eiffel Tower*, 1928

Oil on canvas, 13³/₄ x 18 in.
(35 x 46 cm)
M. Roncey Collection,
Paris

8.121

Stuart Davis
(1894–1964)

Rue des Rats, no. 2, 1928

Oil and sand on
canvas, 20 x 29 in.

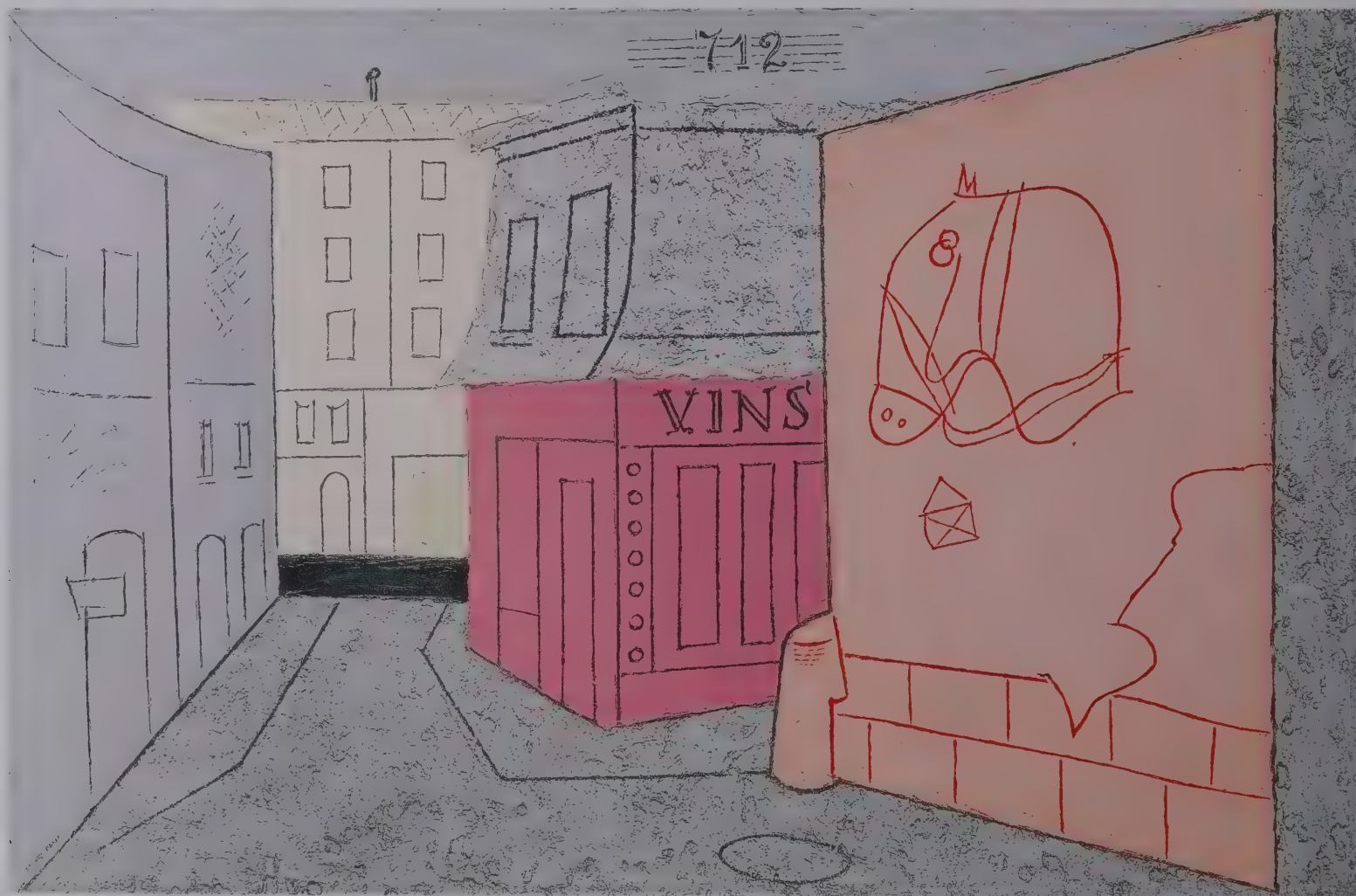
(50.7 x 73.8 cm)

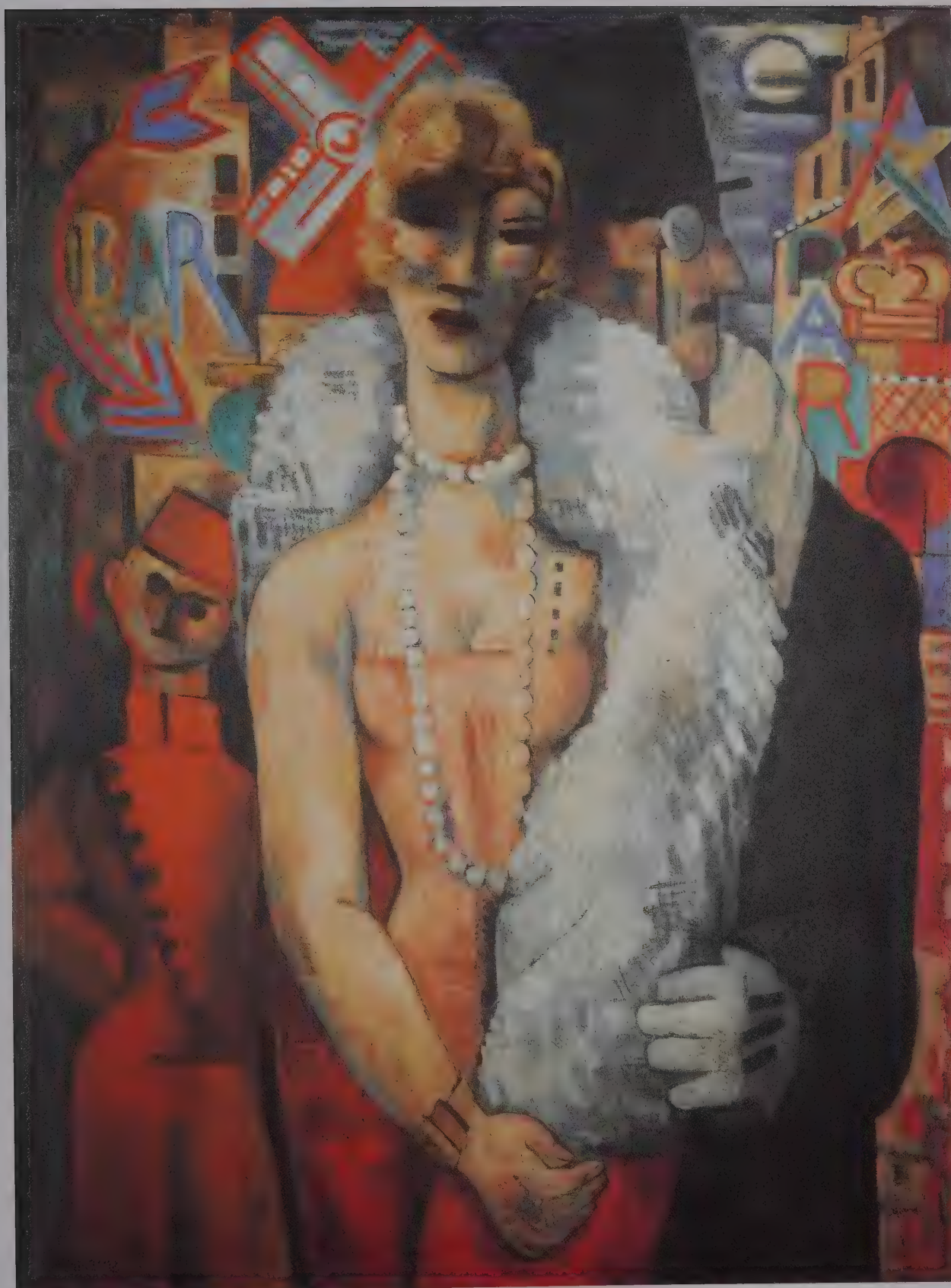
Hirshhorn Museum and
Sculpture Garden,
Smithsonian Institution,
Washington, D.C.; gift
of Joseph H. Hirshhorn,
1972

presence, representing the modern chic that was central to the city's public image. In a similar vein, but with a characteristic infusion of personal mythology, Chagall used the tower to evoke the romantic qualities of Paris (FIG. 8.120). In his work a fantasy image of Vitebsk represented the lost paradise of childhood, while Paris stood for adult fulfillment—the role it had played in fact for Chagall and many others who, like him, had emigrated from eastern Europe to seek liberty and fame in the West.

Dufy's panoramic tapestry, like Léger's ambitious simultaneist *The City* (see FIG. 8.84)—to which it might be considered a playful pendant—offered a grand synthetic portrait of the city. Painting also lent itself to the representation of individual fragments of the urban scene, whether a city street infused with the charm

experienced by a foreign visitor, as in *Rue des Rats No. 2* (FIG. 8.121) by Stuart Davis (influenced by Dufy and Léger), or the brittle nightlife of Pigalle, as represented by Marcel Gromaire (FIG. 8.122). The isolation of details was a feature even more characteristic of photography, one accentuated in the 1920s by technical advances in camera design that improved their portability and speed. These were qualities exploited with virtuoso skill by the young Henri Cartier-Bresson in his first photographs with a Leica (FIG. 8.123). During the interwar years a group of immigrant photographers—including Brassai, Germaine Krull, Man Ray, and André Kertész (FIG. 8.124)—built up a photographic portrait of Paris that combined the outsider's response to the physical and human character of the city with an acute sense of the aesthetic possibilities of the medium. In





8.122

Marcel Gromaire
(1892–1971)

Place Blanche, 1928

Oil on canvas, 37 $\frac{3}{4}$ x
51 $\frac{1}{16}$ in. (96 x 130 cm)
Musée Carnavalet Musée
d'Histoire de Paris



8.123

Henri Cartier-Bresson
(b. 1908)

Place de l'Europe, Paris,
1932

this they were influenced both by the example of contemporary central European photography and by their involvement with the Parisian art community. The latter included the Surrealists, who had a highly distinctive conception of the poetics of urban experience. The realist tradition in literature and film presented Paris as a fulcrum of the social forces of the age as experienced by individuals; modernist artists and architects like Delaunay, Léger, and Le Corbusier saw it as a laboratory for the city of the future; for the Surrealists it was the site of personal adventure, a marvelous accretion of signs whose meaning was to be unraveled through the encounter (often dictated by chance) with persons, places, and the artist's fantasies.

Léger represented the city as a site of dynamic visual excitement; painters like Gromaire and cineasts like Carné portrayed its harshness; Surrealism eroticized it, as the space where the interaction between the individual's inner and outer life reached its fullest poetic intensity. In *Les Vases communicants*, Breton analyzed his memory of his movements across Paris during a troubled period of his life as evidence that, conscious and awake, he had treated the outside world in the same way that, asleep and dreaming, the mind uses memories—to construct a narrative based on desire.⁷⁵ His account of Nadja, whose ability to defy the “real world” so fascinated him, was also a portrait of the streets, squares, and points of the city he associated with her

8.124

André Kertész
(1899–1984)

La Rue du Chateau, 1932



8.125

Max Ernst (1891–1976)
*Vision Induced by the
Nocturnal Aspect of the
Porte Saint-Denis*, 1927

Oil on canvas, 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ x
31 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (65 x 81 cm)
Private collection,
Geneva

and with his life into which she had so strangely irrupted, in a brief but intense liaison engendered by a chance encounter on the street. The book included commissioned photographs of some of these locations, including the “very beautiful and very useless” Porte Saint-Denis.⁷⁶ Max Ernst referred to the hallucinatory qualities of the same monument in a *grattage* painting (FIG. 8.125) that transforms the arch into a forest ruin—culture reclaimed by nature, the classical subverted to the romantic. In an earlier “picture-poem,”

Ernst had evoked “a city full of mystery and poetry.” Images of Paris taken from nineteenth-century illustrated fiction are a recurring feature of his third “collage novel,” *Une Semaine de bonté* (Charity week; FIG. 8.126). Here both public and domestic spaces, sites of drama in the original fiction, become scenes of uncanny appearances, the conflation of the human and animal worlds, violence and sexual encounter.⁷⁷

The entrance to the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, organized by Breton and Eluard at the





Galerie des Beaux-Arts in January 1938, was through a “Surrealist street” bearing a mixture of fictive and real street names, including “rue de la Glacière,” “rue de Tous les Diables,” and “passage des Panoramas.” This led to a central gallery conceived by Duchamp (FIG. 8.127). The street was, in fact, a form of *passage*, the covered arcades that had been a distinctive feature of mid-nineteenth-century Paris development. Aragon identified them as early as 1921, in *Anicet ou le panorama, roman* (Anicet or the panorama, novel), as nodal points in the elaboration of a modern mythology, infused with a sense of magic in keeping with the ravages of industrialized society. In Aragon’s “Passage des Cosmoramas,” fantasy becomes reality, the tailors’ dummies dance, and Anicet is seduced by one of them, “la Parfumeuse” in Second Empire costume. He identifies her in retrospect as the “modern beauty” of Rimbaud’s generation, which was such a key influence on his own.⁷⁸ In Aragon’s “novel” Anicet seeks out Mirabelle, the (cruel) beauty of contemporary Paris, but the Surrealists in fact were haunted by the past. Breton explained his fascination with the Saint-Denis quarter and its two arches by their status as historical debris: “They were once part of the

wall of Paris, which gives these two vessels, as though pulled by the centrifugal force of the city, a totally lost appearance shared only, for me, by the wonderful Tour St. Jacques.”⁷⁹ Aragon’s essay “Le Paysan de Paris” (Parisian peasant) is an homage to the “mythical” spaces of the passage de l’Opéra of 1822 and the Parc des Buttes-Chaumont of the 1860s. Here Aragon identified the *passages* as the threatened “sanctuaries of a cult of the ephemeral, the spectral landscape of forbidden pleasures and professions, incomprehensible in the past and which the future will not know.”⁸⁰ The Surrealists’ sense of the poetic force of the out-moded was identified by the German cultural theorist Walter Benjamin as a central feature of their contribution to contemporary thought. Aragon’s text on the passage de l’Opéra had a formative influence on Benjamin’s own reflections, which grew into his “Arcades project”: the reading of the *passages* in relation to the writing of Baudelaire, as allegories of capitalism. According to Benjamin, the Surrealists had, better than any others, achieved the “profane illumination” that could lead to a genuine revolutionary poetics. And they had found it in their approach to “the most dreamed-of of their objects, the city of Paris itself.”⁸¹

8.126 (left)

Max Ernst (1891–1976)

La Cour du Dragon, volume 3, plate 1, from the five-volume collection *Une Semaine de Bonté, ou Les Sept Éléments capitaux* (Paris: Editions Jeanne Bucher, 1934), 1934

Line-block reproduction after collage, 10¼ x 8 in. (27.3 x 20.5 cm)
The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Louis E. Stern Collection

8.127 (below)

Salle centrale,
Exposition
Internationale du
Surréalisme, 1938,
conceived by
Marcel Duchamp





ART DEBATES OF THE 1930S



When Pierre Loeb saw Balthus's painting *The Street* (FIG. 8.128) in the artist's studio, he was impressed and surprised. This was a work that could be deemed "realist" in that it depicted a contemporary scene using conventional devices without striking exaggerations of color or form. Yet the rather stiff manner of painting and the impersonality of the figures created a disturbing "unreal" effect: "One seems to be seeing some strange dream in which the actors are sleepwalkers, and an anguished atmosphere emanates from this perfect composition. . . . We had already felt a sense of trouble, even unease, in front of the 'absent' look of certain of Picasso's faces. . . . But this astonishing painting could mark the intermediate stage between evasion in dream and the return, through sleepwalking, to the reality of tomorrow."⁸²

The painting and Loeb's account of it reflect both the pervasiveness of Surrealist influence on the visual arts in Paris during the early 1930s and the renewed debate over the proper ends and means of art that was developing within the Parisian art community. This debate was informed by social and political circumstances. The deteriorating international situation after the Nazi rise to power in Germany was mirrored in France by an increasing polarization of political forces. The growth of right-wing movements contemptuous of the political class of the Third Republic was countered by an alliance on the left that included Communist support. The victory of this Popular Front in elections in the spring of 1936 was accompanied by strikes and occupations that appeared, briefly, to threaten the fundamental order of society. By that time France was experiencing the full brunt of the worldwide economic slump, which caused extensive hardship and laid open to question the capitalist system. Artists hit by the collapse of the art market were led to reconsider the relationship between private and public patronage and to turn to the state for support. While conservatives in the art world called for a reassertion of traditional "French" values, those on the left argued that the situation called for a radical politicization of art practice, although they disagreed over what this actually meant.

8.128

Balthus (Balthazar
Klossowski de Rola)
(1908–2001)

The Street, 1933

Oil on canvas,
76¼ x 94½ in.
(195 x 240 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; James
Thrall Soby bequest



Picasso, for one, was not troubled by financial difficulties. The retrospective organized by the Galerie Georges Petit consortium in 1932 was the culmination of a process of market promotion that had secured a continuing international demand for his painting despite the Depression. During the 1930s Picasso, as always, pursued his private artistic obsessions. The Surrealists had always placed him in a category of his own. Breton had constantly sought to associate him with the movement, without expecting him to conform to its line. Many of Picasso's works of the late 1920s and early 1930s show affinity with Surrealism, particularly through their use of an extravagant metaphoric mode of representation and their distinctive erotic charge. *Girl before a Mirror* (FIG. 8.129), one of a series of works celebrating his love for Marie-Thérèse Walter, recalls the languid sensuality of Matisse and Ingres. However, its celebration of desire and its intimation of the powerful forces of the unconscious that drive it evoke Breton's claim that "you, like us, seek only to descend and come up from our sleep."⁸³ In 1930 the dissident group around Georges Bataille and the periodical *Documents* challenged Breton's attempt to claim Picasso as "one of us." Michel Leiris argued that the Surrealists had presented Picasso as a man fleeing reality, whereas in fact his work involved penetrating the real world and grasping it to show it "in all its pores."⁸⁴ This polemic, besides indicating the talismanic, and slippery, character of the term *realism* at this time, demonstrates the extraordinary prestige that Picasso enjoyed in avant-garde circles. These observers all agreed that even though it was difficult and private, his art contained progressive, revolutionary power.

"In opposition to painting with a social subject we advocate that whose latent content is revolutionary, whatever the apparent subject," Breton told a workers' newspaper in 1935.⁸⁵ In 1937 the particular circumstances of the Spanish Civil War caused Picasso to make some overtly political work: typically, he did so using an uncompromising personal style and an inventive, difficult approach to the subject matter. *Guernica* (see FIG. 8.29), a mural commissioned for the Spanish Pavilion at the 1937 exposition, makes unambiguous reference to the atrocity of bombing civilians in the ancient capital of the Basque country, by a special squadron of the German air force operating on behalf of

Spain's nationalist army insurgents. But *Guernica* is also a work of startling originality, which eschews the use of color in favor of monochrome and employs flat, jagged forms and a highly stylized, simplified mode of depiction. *Dreams and Lies of Franco* (FIG. 8.130), two sets of etchings linked to a stream-of-consciousness text by the artist, satirizes the character and ideology of the nationalist leader in a crude shorthand style. Picasso's contribution to the pavilion—which also included examples of his current sculpture—was highly valued by the Spanish authorities, who had recently persuaded him to become honorary director of the Prado museum. The use made of his work at the show and in the publicity surrounding it, designed to raise international awareness of the struggle in Spain, constituted a successful alliance of bourgeois elite culture and the political left. But the limits of this success are illustrated by the fact that visitors to the pavilion apparently spent little time in front of the mural and by the virulent debate between the two British critics Herbert Read and Anthony Blunt, occasioned by the latter's response to it. Read, an enthusiastic admirer of abstract and Surrealist art, argued that the message of Picasso's art was enhanced by its radical form, whereas Blunt, writing from a Marxist perspective, stated that *Guernica* "is not an act of public mourning, but the expression of a private brain-storm which gives no evidence that Picasso has realised the political significance of *Guernica*."⁸⁶

The Blunt and Read polemics reproduced central features of the violent debates that had shaken the Parisian Surrealist group since the late 1920s. What was at issue was, above all, its identity as a revolutionary movement. In 1925 the group had collaborated with left-wing intellectuals in condemning the French colonial war in Morocco; in 1927 several Surrealists, including Aragon, Breton, and Eluard, had sought to demonstrate their radical political and social engagement by joining the French Communist party. In the Second Manifesto of Surrealism Breton identified numerous ex-colleagues whom he claimed had been expelled from the group because they lacked total commitment to its aims, and he emphatically declared that Surrealism adhered, "without reserve," to "the principle of historical materialism." He and his colleagues changed the name of their review from *La Révolution surréaliste* to *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*,

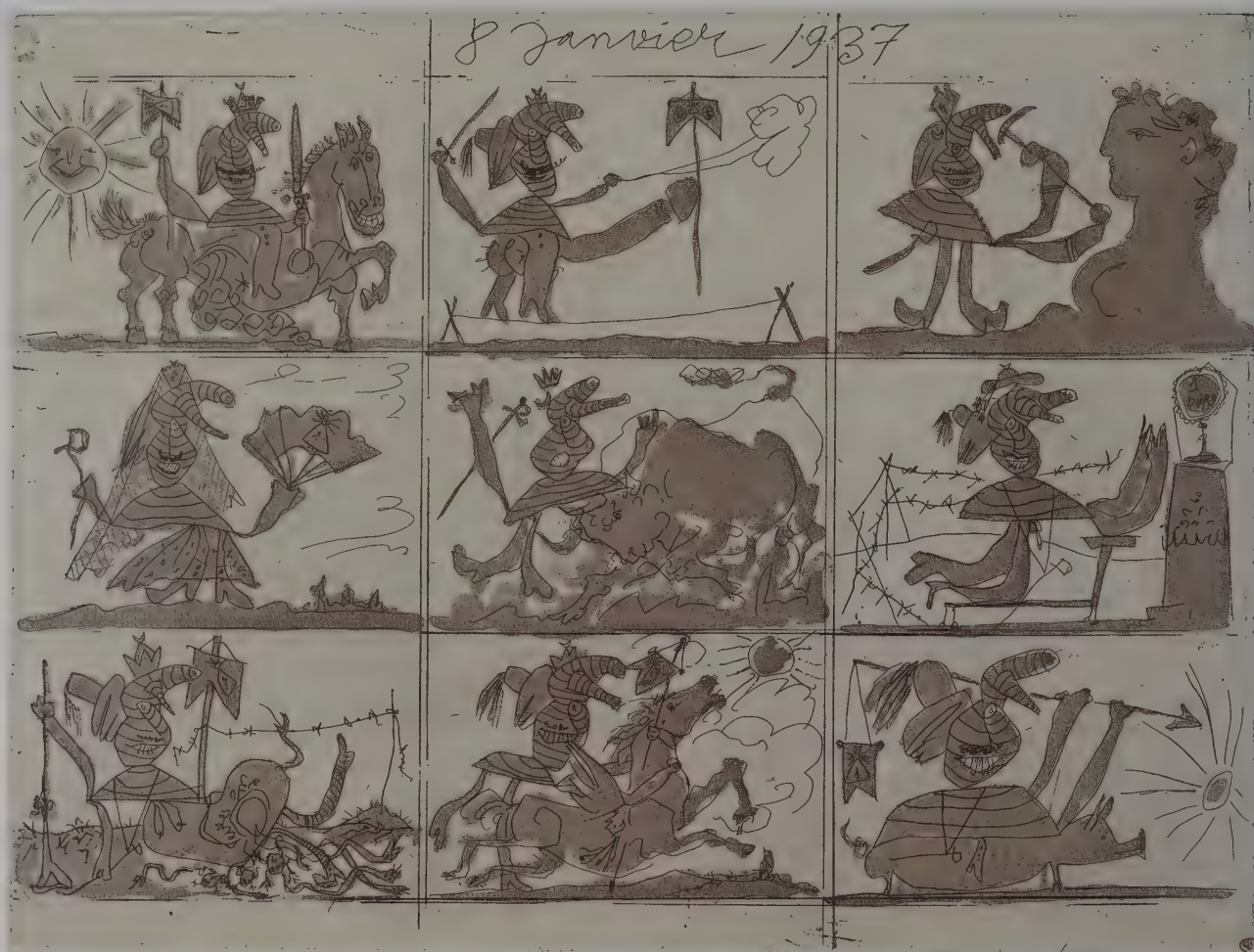
8.129

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973)

Girl before a Mirror,
March 1932

Oil on canvas, 64 x 51¼ in.
(162.3 x 130.2 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York;
gift of Mrs. Simon
Guggenheim



8.130

Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)

*Dreams and Lies of
Franco: Plate 1, 1937*

Etching and aquatint,
12½ x 16½ in.

(31.7 x 42.2 cm)

Musée Picasso

the aim of which was to “prepare the definitive alignment to the fatality of revolution of today’s living intellectual forces.” However, in the manifesto Breton also attacked the philistinism of the party and defiantly maintained the distinctiveness of the Surrealist contribution to the revolutionary effort.⁸⁷

This position was unacceptable to the Communists, particularly at a time when, in the Soviet Union, the doctrine of Socialist Realism was being developed by Josef Stalin and his allies. Georges Sadoul and Louis Aragon attended a congress of intellectuals and writers in Kharkov in 1930, where the Surrealist position was violently criticized. This proved to be a turning point; within a year both had defected from the Surrealist group, and Aragon became an important voice attacking the movement and defending Moscow’s orthodox line on cultural struggle. “I broke off relations with men who spoke of nothing but revolution but for whom

there was something in the world more valuable than the Revolution itself,” he told American Communists in April 1935.⁸⁸ By that time the Communists had abandoned their ultrasectarian positions and were seeking to build antifascist alliances, culminating in the Popular Front policies that brought the left to power in Spain and France in 1936. Aragon, who was seeking to promote a “realism” that would communicate contemporary social forces, was very active in Parisian artistic and literary circles. In June 1935, at the International Writers Congress in Defense of Culture, he again attacked the Surrealist position, stating: “It should be emphasized with force, and against the Surrealists themselves, that the only living element in their work is not that which exudes dream or madness, but that which translates, with the violence of youth, the reality of their time.”⁸⁹ Breton, meanwhile, considered Aragon’s shift of allegiance as a personal betrayal and a contemptible

abandonment of principle. Breton continued to defend the distinctive nature of Surrealist activity and—in collaboration with other dissidents, notably the Trotskyists—sought to challenge the theory and practice of Soviet-inspired cultural policy.

The political situation in France after the violent demonstrations in Paris of February 1934, in which extreme right-wing movements challenged the legitimacy of the Republic, gave these arguments an urgency beyond the immediate circle of the Surrealist group. The need to find social and political justification for making art was very widely felt, and the debates on the nature of realism in art organized in 1936 by the Maison de la Culture—a Communist-supported institution of which Aragon was secretary—had considerable impact on the Parisian art community. Aragon called on artists to refuse exploitation by the capitalist ruling class and to develop a “new realism” that would employ modern art and photography as weapons in the political struggle to change society. The participants in these debates, including Eduard Goerg, Marcel Gromaire, Le Corbusier, and Léger, did not share a single view of the nature or importance of realism, but the social, progressive role of art was the starting point for their discussions.⁹⁰ The political and economic circumstances of the time, and the cultural strategies adopted by left-wing organizations in response to them, promoted artists’ feelings of solidarity with the working class. Jean

Renoir’s stylish and charming film *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (FIG. 8.131), made in collaboration with Jacques Prévert and the agit-prop theatrical troupe Groupe Octobre, was a product of this situation. An evil boss is killed by an innocent dreamer in order to preserve a workers’ cooperative. A “jury” made up of workers in a bar near the frontier, when informed of the facts, decides to let M. Lange and his mistress escape to freedom. Shortly after making *Monsieur Lange*, Renoir was engaged by the Communist party to direct *La Vie est à nous* (Life is ours), a propaganda film in support of the party’s Popular Front policies.

The concept of realism was as problematic in cinema as in other media. In 1938 Prévert and Renoir almost came to blows at a meeting at the Maison de la Culture when the latter described the Carné-Prévert film *Le Quai des brumes* as “fascist” because its view of humanity was so bleak.⁹¹ In their contributions to the Maison’s 1936 debates, both Le Corbusier and Léger had sought to defend the modernist position against the implication that it was tied to a moribund bourgeois social system. Léger argued that the “new realism” that he and his colleagues practiced was an aesthetic translation of the modern world that had many affinities with the popular culture of the working class. Given education and sufficient leisure, the latter would have no difficulty accepting it.⁹² Like other artists wanting to establish a social role for painting, Léger was interested in developing a

8.131

Jean Renoir (1894–1979)
Jules Berry in *Le Crime de Monsieur Lange* (*The Crime of Monsieur Lange*), 1936





8.132

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

*Composition with Two
Parrots*, 1935–39

Oil on canvas,
13 ft. 1½ in. x 15 ft. 9 in.
(4.00 x 4.80 m)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

modern form of mural art. While he remained committed to an art that represented the dynamism of modern life, his work in this period showed a new interest in the figure and a move toward a more organic form of representation. *Composition with Two Parrots* (FIG. 8.132), for example, is a mural-size painting dominated by four figures at leisure; the general stylistic character is of rounded natural forms rather than the sharp geometric elements of Léger's earlier work. These were images conceived in the spirit of optimistic solidarity that was

one aspect of the rhetoric of the Popular Front period. They may also show the influence of another general trend in the cultural discourse of the time: to emphasize the rural base of the French nation and its intuitive affinities with the natural, biological order. As Romy Golan has shown, the image of France as *terroir*, linking French identity to notions of the soil and of place, was extremely pervasive throughout the interwar period, as the country responded to the traumas of first the war and then the Depression. Although they were most

evident in the work of artists such as André Dunoyer de Segonzac (FIG. 8.133), who engaged explicitly with the French landscape tradition, these currents also affected modernists including Le Corbusier and Léger.⁹³

Part of the Popular Front strategy adopted by the French Communist party had been to promote an image of the party as defender of French values, including those of the peasantry. By adopting this policy, the Communists were compromising some of their fundamental tenets and seeking to appropriate an ideological space that had previously been the preserve of the right. From the end of the nineteenth century, the group L'Action Française had promoted the association of reactionary politics with the defense of place, language, and traditional culture. Although in fact many areas of rural France had strong republican traditions, the left was identified much more with urban centers, and with Paris above all. Paris was the center and guarantor of liberty in the republican tradition, and the locus of pernicious ideology, degeneracy, and a dangerous cosmopolitanism in the rhetoric of the extreme right. The

critic Camille Mauclair reproduced this reactionary view of the urban environment in his attacks on modern art in this period, in vitriolic texts such as *Les Météques contre l'art français* (Aliens against French art). Some of its terms were even employed by Waldemar George, a writer who was himself of Jewish origin, who argued in 1931 that the French school was threatened by the School of Paris because the latter was dominated by immigrants who were unable, or unwilling, to integrate the complex humanistic and aesthetic traditions of French art into their work.⁹⁴

The ability of the left—which persisted and ultimately triumphed during World War II—to mobilize concepts of national identity in its cause demonstrated that these ideas were not the exclusive preserve of the reactionaries. And Paris in the 1930s remained a relatively tolerant, pluralist environment for immigrants of all kinds, including artists. But the racist tones of this writing on art were ominous. After the trauma of defeat in 1940, the cultural climate changed dramatically for the worse.

8.133

André Dunoyer de Segonzac (1884–1974)
The Road from Couilly, outside Paris, 1932

Oil on canvas,
25 1/8 x 39 1/8 in.
(65 x 100 cm)
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou



V I C H Y

On May 10, 1940, the German army launched its Blitzkrieg in the west. By the end of the month it was clear that the British and French armies were incapable of resisting them. Paris was declared "open"—thereby saving it from bombardment; the government fled south, followed by about 2 million of the local inhabitants seized by a panic that affected almost the entire population of northern France. German troops entered a silent capital on May 14. Eleven days later the new head of government, Marshal Pétain, hero of World War I and a deeply conservative politician, signed the armistice. France was now divided into a "free" zone in the south and east, ruled from Vichy, and an occupied zone in the north and west, in which the authorities were effectively subordinate to the German military administration. Paris acquired an obtrusive Nazi presence: a swastika replaced the national flag on the National Assembly and other public buildings; the Eiffel Tower was draped with a banner declaring that "Germany is victorious on all fronts."

The general tenor of the Vichy regime was deeply conservative and corporatist. In cultural matters, this meant the adoption of antimodernist policies and

the assertion of traditional French values associated with the land, family, and respect for authority, embodied by the paternalistic figure of the marshal himself. In Paris the situation was aggravated by the presence of the occupying Nazis, with their stringent anti-Semitic policies, and by the fact that the city became the center for protofascist French collaborationist movements, whose views were diffused on Radio-Paris and in newspapers such as the vitriolic *Je suis partout* (I am everywhere), edited by Robert Brasillach. The institutionalized racism integral to Nazi rule, which the Vichy regime at least partially adopted, was highly in evidence in the city. In September 1941 the Institut d'Etudes des Questions Juives (Institute for the study of Jewish matters) organized a propaganda exhibition at the Palais Berlitz on the theme "The Jew and France," using caricature and abuse to denigrate the role of Jews in French society. In July 1942 the police carried out raids in the city, arresting about 12,000 non-French Jews. Placed in a holding camp at Drancy, most of them were subsequently deported to concentration camps in the east. Many of them died there.

This repressive regime threatened many members

8.134

Bernard Villemot
(1911–1989)

*The Homeland. Follow
Me and Keep Your Faith
in France Eternal* 1941

Lithograph
Private collection





of the art world, either because they were Jewish or because they were identified with “bolshevik” ideas. Those who could went into exile either abroad or internally. Paul Rosenberg, for instance, moved his business to New York; Kahnweiler transferred legal ownership of the Galerie Simon to the Aryan Louise Leiris and moved to a country retreat in the unoccupied zone. Jean Lurçat was one of many artists who sat out the war far from the capital; already engaged in the revival of artistic tapestry, he carried on working at Aubusson, where he was able, in

1943, to make in secret a tapestry based on Paul Eluard’s poem “Liberty” (FIG. 8.135). Max Ernst, after a traumatic period of imprisonment, managed to escape to the United States. His *Europe after the Rain* (FIG. 8.136) presents a poignant image of desolation—the Old World returned to a state of barbarism by those forces of reaction that he and his Surrealist colleagues had fought against throughout the previous two decades.

Despite the war, Paris revived quickly as center of entertainment and leisure for those privileged groups

8.135

Jean Lurçat (1892–1966)
Liberté (after a poem by
Paul Eluard), 1943

Aubusson tapestry,
92½ x 130 in.
(235 x 330.5 cm)
Musée National d’Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

(including German officers and black-market speculators) who could afford it. Art life also picked up again. There remained a substantial community of artists wanting to exhibit, complemented by an audience of bored citizens eager for distraction and numerous buyers looking for safe investments. "You would need to be here to understand what's going on," Jeanne Bucher wrote to Rose Adler in October 1941. "It's like the stock exchange, constant rise in specific stocks."⁹⁵ Bucher herself discreetly promoted the work she admired, managing to hold exhibitions of Kandinsky, Louis Marcoussis, and

Miró; she also bought classic modern work whenever she could. She did not boycott the occupiers; if a German was sufficiently interested in modern art, she was ready to accept him in the gallery. This prudent approach seems to have been fairly typical of the art trade. Some less scrupulous dealers exploited the situation by helping supply Nazi officials and German museums with works from French collections.

In the context of high culture the most important example of official collaboration was the Arno Breker exhibition held at the Orangerie in May 1942 (FIG. 8.137).



Breker was Hitler's most favored sculptor; he had been provided with extensive workshops near Berlin to produce his idealized models of Aryan manhood. Breker also embodied the close links between German artistic culture and France. He had studied in Paris and lived there from 1927 to 1933. His work had close affinities with that of Maillol and Charles Despiau, and he had numerous contacts in the French art community. Despiau wrote a biography of Breker that was published to coincide with the Paris show; 8,700 copies were sold.⁹⁶ The honorary committee of the exhibition was

made up of leading figures in the French art world, including de Segonzac, Vlaminck, and Derain. These artists had all taken part in a tour of Germany the previous autumn, including a visit to Breker's studios, which had been a propaganda coup for the Nazis.

That German journey became infamous. After the liberation of Paris in the summer of 1944, radical artists' groups denounced the participants as collaborators and succeeded in having them temporarily banned from exhibiting. Derain believed that the accusation contributed to Despiau's death in 1946: "He took it too

8.136

Max Ernst (1891–1976)

Europe after the Rain,
1940–42

Oil on canvas,
21½ x 58½ in.

(54.8 x 147.8 cm)

Wadsworth Atheneum,
Hartford, Connecticut;
Ella Gallup Sumner and
Mary Catlin Sumner
Collection Fund



seriously; he should have done like me and not cared a damn about it."⁹⁷ Derain seems to have taken part in the trip largely because he had been led to believe (wrongly, as it turned out) that in exchange he would be allowed to reoccupy his house and studio in Chambourcy, which had been requisitioned by the Germans. The members of the group had also been told, falsely, that they would be able to intercede in favor of young French artists who were prisoners of war. Although one or two of the artists on the tour expressed some admiration afterward for the organization of the arts in Germany, Derain and his colleagues were guilty mainly of naïveté. Like most of their countrymen, particularly those who had experienced the terrors of World War I, they wanted only to live and work as normally as possible in the oppressively difficult circumstances of the Occupation.

Derain himself, although his work was exhibited quite widely in Paris, seems to have done very little painting during the war years. He worked mainly on the series of woodcut illustrations to Rabelais's *Pantagruel*, commissioned by Albert Skira in 1941 and completed in 1943 (FIG. 8.138). Apart from its importance in Derain's œuvre and in the history of the French illustrated book, this work also exemplifies the ideological ambiguity inherent in much visual art of the time. In some ways the *Pantagruel* woodcuts can be related to



P A N T A G R U E L

Pétainist cultural attitudes: they illustrate a major work of French literary history and use a technique and style reminiscent of the simple *images d'Épinal* illustrating stereotypes and stories from folk tradition. But Derain's stylized and witty forms also recall the radical, innovative work he had made as a young man to illustrate Apollinaire's story "L'Enchanteur pourrissant" (The rotting magician). And certainly Rabelais was an exemplar not of a conformist, quietist French tradition but of humanism, satire, and linguistic experiment.

Skira, who had published the Surrealist-influenced periodical *Minotaure* with Tériade in Paris in the 1930s, had moved back to Switzerland in 1941. From there he commissioned and published, during the war, six volumes devoted to the Primitives in his series *Les Trésors de la Peinture Française*. These books were quite in accordance with official cultural policy in France, but their patriotic tone, laying claim to a French artistic tradition stemming from the Middle Ages, had a potentially subversive reading given the subjugated state of the nation. Some exhibitions in Paris used the cover of tradition very deliberately to evade criticism. In a 1942



8.137
Arno Breker (1900–1991)
The Wounded (detail),
1942

show in the Galerie Friedland entitled *Hommage aux anciens* (Homage to our ancestors), the young French painter Francis Gruber was able to convey a fairly explicit message of resistance through a reference to Jacques Callot—the seventeenth-century artist from Lorraine (like Charles de Gaulle) who was famous for his etchings on the miseries of war (FIG. 8.139). The group known as the Jeunes Peintres de Tradition Française (Young painters in the French tradition), centered on the painter Jean Bazaine, employed historical and religious allusion both in genuine homage to the spiritual legacy of medieval France and to justify the

vivid colors and high level of abstraction in their work. Both modern in style and patriotic in tone, their paintings provided a visual expression of the attitudes of the government-funded Jeune France movement, which sponsored the group's first exhibition and in doing so reflected the political ambivalences that characterized populist Catholicism in the Vichy period.

The opportunities to publicize overtly oppositional art were extremely limited in occupied Paris. A few artists provided illustrations for Resistance tracts and publications by writers such as Aragon and Eluard, both of whom were active in Resistance circles. After the

8.139

Francis Gruber
(1912–1948)

*Hommage to Jacques
Callot*, c. 1942

Oil on canvas,
33¹³/₁₆ x 45⁵/₈ in.
(86 x 116 cm)

Formerly J. Bazaine
Collection, Paris





8.140

Boris Taslitzky (b. 1911)

*The Small Camp at
Buchenwald, 1945*

Oil on canvas,
9 ft. 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. x 16 ft. 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(3 x 5 m)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

German tour a group of artists linked to the prewar Maison de la Culture published a clandestine review, *L'Art français*, which attacked the tour participants in the name of the Front National des Arts. Five issues appeared between 1941 and March 1944, raising a voice of protest against collaboration with the Germans, defending the economic interests of artists, and arguing for an art that participated in the struggle for freedom taking place in Europe. Late in the war, in June 1944, the group was able to circulate one actual model of such an art. *Vaincre* (Win) was an album of twelve lithographs by different artists, including André Fougeron (a central figure in the Front National), Edouard Goerg, Edouard Pignon, and Boris Taslitzky (who had been deported to Buchenwald). These prints, invoking the tradition of political imagery stemming from Daumier, were bitter caricatures on the themes of degradation,

suffering, and imprisonment. By this time, France's own liberation was under way. Artist members of the Resistance were able to take part in the Paris uprising that began on August 19 and ended in euphoria on the 25th with the capitulation of the prudent and demoralized German commander and the entry of Charles de Gaulle, General Jacques-Philippe Leclerc, and a French division into the city. A new era, with new problems, had opened.

The 1943 Salon d'Automne had included a retrospective exhibition of the work of Georges Braque. One year later, the Salon de la Libération included an homage to Picasso. Braque's meditative, poetic work, like that of Matisse, was widely appreciated as a distinctive contribution to the French painting tradition. Its stylistic originality was no longer shocking, and its *intimiste*, apolitical subject matter was reassuring to both the

general public and the authorities. Picasso remained more controversial. In fact, some of his paintings were vandalized at the Salon. Under a ban requested by General Franco, Picasso had not exhibited in Paris during the war. He was now considered a hero of defiant radical practice. Since 1943 he had been the president of the Front National des Arts, and the day before the Salon opened, he announced his adherence to the French Communist party. However, to an extent his example, like Braque's, was superseded in the debates over the future of art that now developed in Paris.

The 1930s arguments over realism, abstraction, and Surrealism were renewed—intensified by the political situation in France, where the Communists were initially very powerful, and by the emerging confrontation between the Soviet and American blocs. Two paintings exhibited at this time exemplify the radically different directions in which contemporary practice appeared to be moving. Taslitzky contributed, with Picasso, to the exhibition *Art et résistance* held at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in February 1946. In June, Taslitzky's painting *The Small Camp at Buchenwald* (FIG. 8.140)

was acquired for the nation. Taslitzky, like André Fougeron, was close to the orthodox Communist position that the artist's task was to use conventional techniques to show the contemporary world in all its harshness—something Taslitzky was particularly qualified to do, since he had survived imprisonment in a camp. A year earlier, an exhibition of work by Jean Fautrier at the Galerie René Drouin had caused a sensation in the art world. Under the general title *Hostages* he had presented a series of works made up of pale abstract forms in thick impasto framed and overlaid by washes of blue, green, and ocher, with occasional touches of pink. Their textures and shapes, reinforced by the titles—one, *Oradour-sur-Glane* (FIG. 8.141), referred to the site of one of the worst atrocities of the war in France—were suggestive of torture and dismemberment. In art terms these paintings constituted a denial of both the figurative and the aesthetic, in a return to some elementary stage of creation (Fautrier was probably influenced by the revelation of the cave paintings at Lascaux, in 1940). For the critic Michel Tapié, this exhibition was one of two in the immediate

8.141

Jean Fautrier
(1898–1964)

Oradour-sur-Glane,
1945

Oil on paper pasted on
canvas, 57 x 44⁵/₁₆ in.
(145 x 112.7 cm)
The Menil Collection,
Houston



postwar years that marked the starting point of what he called “un art autre” (an art other), a drastic reformulation of the nature of art that rejected all established conventions of art making, including realism and geometric abstraction.⁹⁸

The second exhibition to which Tapié referred was *Hautes Pâtes* (Encrustations) by Jean Dubuffet, held at the Galerie Drouin in the spring of 1946. In this extraordinary series of works crude drawings were inscribed in dense, earthy, mixed-media grounds, evoking simultaneously the spontaneity of urban graffiti, the inventive figuration of African and Oceanic sculpture, and the Art Brut of the uninstructed and the insane. Dubuffet finally committed himself to painting in 1942, at the age of forty-one. He immediately opened an attack

on established culture, with his images of the city and the country exhibited in October 1944. These employed childlike drawing with thick impasto effects to make startling, satirical images of ordinary life. In *View of Paris, the Life of Pleasure* (FIG. 8.142), of February 1944, Dubuffet presented a comic, intentionally naive view of the city, using his public’s awareness that life in Paris during the Occupation had, in fact, been characterized by pleasure for a few (underwritten in many cases by collaboration or black-market profiteering), but by hardship and anxiety for the majority.

In March 1945 Parisians were offered another, more comforting image of their city. After a long gestation, during which its production had changed hands and moved from Nice to Paris and back again, the latest

8.142
Jean Dubuffet
(1901–1985)
View of Paris, the Life of Pleasure, February 1944
Oil on canvas,
35 x 45¼ in.
(88.5 x 116 cm)
David M. Solinger
Collection, New York



product of the Marcel Carné–Jacques Prévert partnership had its première at the Palais de Chaillot. Filmmaking during the war had been particularly difficult because of the close interest taken in the industry by the authorities. This supervision meant that the social realism of the 1930s was no longer tenable. Carné and Prévert had made a successful adjustment to the circumstances by turning to historical fantasy in *Les Visiteurs du soir* (The evening visitors, 1942). *Les Enfants du paradis* (FIG. 8.143) was another historical drama, situated in nineteenth-century Paris, around the “Boulevard du Crime.” It plays on a number of key Parisian stereotypes—a careless, charming actor; a cold man of the world; a criminal with an artist’s soul; a beautiful woman who maintains an essential innocence while

trading on her sexual allure; and an anxious, brilliant, melancholy artist, Baptiste, played by Jean-Louis Barrault. The Baptiste figure, in a variety of guises, had been a recurring feature in French art since Antoine Watteau (see FIG. 4.28)—complemented, particularly in the twentieth century, by the more resilient, cunning type embodied in the commedia dell’arte by Harlequin. *Les Enfants du paradis*, presented at a traumatic and uncertain moment in French history, told its audience that vital elements of the national spirit were still intact—its wit and artistry, its sense of style, its understanding of love. And the site where this spirit thrived and that nourished its resilience, its irreverence and individualism, and its roots in the culture of the people was Paris.

8.143

Marcel Carné
(1909–1996)

Film still from *Les
Enfants du paradis*
(*Children of Paradise*),
1945









(pages 1392-1393)
Peter Turnley (b. 1955)

Pedestrians outside
a butcher shop, 1981

Inge Morath
(1923-2002)
Market Scene, 1958



Henri Cartier-Bresson
(b. 1908)
Les Halles, 1959





(opposite)
Inge Morath
(1923–2002)
Galerie Vivienne,
1957

(this page)
Inge Morath
Dog in a front of a store,
1958







9.2

Jean Dubuffet (1901–1985)

Fabric of Episodes, 1976

Acrylic on *papier collés* on canvas,
97 3/4 x 125 3/8 in. (248.5 x 318.5 cm)

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou

9.1 (gatefold)

Christo (b. 1935) and Jeanne-Claude (b. 1935)

The Pont Neuf Wrapped, 1975–85

40,876 square meters of woven polyamide fabric,
13,076 meters of rope, 12.1 metric tons of steel chains

In a thousand years, a man may well stand like me behind a window, looking out, as I look out now, at this cityscape of houses behind trees and at this sky blurred by spring rain. I try to picture myself having crossed that great expanse of time, and see myself as that man. What would he be thinking? Is he happy? Does he sometimes ask himself why he is on this earth, and why in just this era, not another? What does he believe? What does he see? The same curiosity that he arouses in me, others—who were already gone when Lutetia had risen out of the mud—have felt about us. Here, perhaps, at this exact place where I now stand, a barbarian dreamed of the men of the future. And I, I daydream of this future Paris, raised on this very site, where rough concrete, glass, and steel, and perhaps other materials still unknown, will be the elements of a beauty without end.

—JULIEN GREEN

Paris, 1983; translated by Krister Swartz

“They have stolen four years of our future,” wrote Jean-Paul Sartre in the first issue of *Les Temps modernes*, which appeared in October 1945, four months after the German surrender. Nonetheless, Sartre and many others had already begun to envisage the postwar era more than a year earlier, when Paris was liberated in August 1944. A month later, de Gaulle established the provisional government of the French Republic in Paris on the strength of “the investi-

ture of a triumphant people, master of its destiny.”¹ But where might that destiny lead? Paul Colin’s poster *France Liberated* (FIG. 9.3), signed and dated August 19, 1944, the day of the Paris insurrection, gives form to victory by depicting not a military event like the Normandy landings but Marianne, the embodiment of France, dressed in a ragged tunic evoking wounds and destitution, her hands bearing the stigmata of a crucifixion. Her left arm seems to hold back the past, while

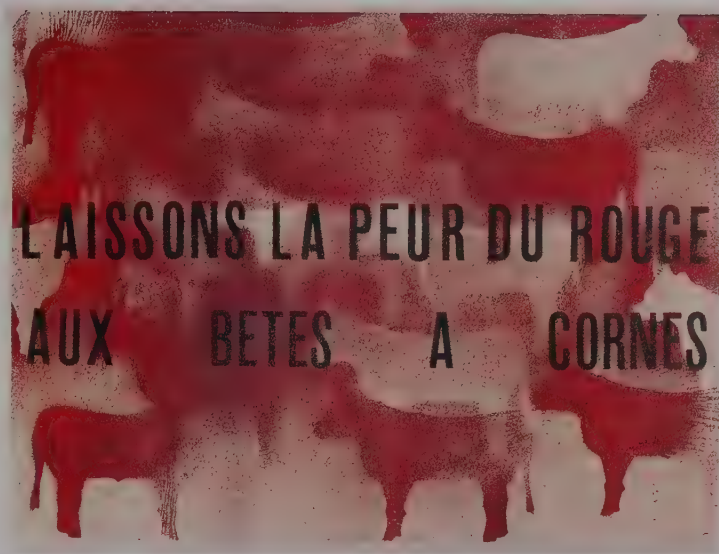


9.3
Paul Colin (1892–1985)
France Liberated,
August 1944
Lithograph,
63 x 46⁷/₈ in.
(160 x 119 cm)
Centre International de
Recherche sur l’Imagerie
Politique

her right arm is raised, the wounded hand shielding her eyes, as though she were dazed by the uncertainties or promises of the future.

"Paris has been broken, Paris has been martyred, but Paris has been liberated by herself," General Charles de Gaulle declared on August 25, 1944.² The capital was thus exceptional in that it experienced an "endogenous" liberation⁴ unleashed by the forces of the Resistance and the Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur (FFI), whereas most other French cities were liberated by Allied troops, after intense bombardment. The excitement generated by the events of August 1944 was followed by a gloomy impatience, however. On March 2, 1945, de Gaulle said, "We are only beginning to discover both the true condition in which we have been left by the hateful flood and the extent of the effort of reconstruction and renewal that it has forced on us for many years." The words rebirth and renewal would be used again and again in the years following the Liberation, while the effort demanded of the country, the feeling of powerlessness brought about by the cold war, the economic dependence on the United States resulting from the implementation of the Marshall Plan, all combined to leave the French with the feeling that their history did not fully belong to them.

After this unsettled period, the 1950s were marked by economic growth, a more comfortable lifestyle, and a taste for consumption reflected by the popular success of large exhibitions, such as the Salon des Arts Ménagers (the Ideal Home Exhibition) and the Salon de l'Automobile. Beginning in the mid-1950s, as reconstruction began to bear fruit, the state finally turned its attention to the modernization of Paris, which had been delayed for so long. The developments that followed would be hotly debated in the press. In the early 1970s, controversy surrounded the demolition of Les Halles and then the construction of the Centre Georges Pompidou, even as the suburbs became, for some, the true indicators of cultural movement. If the politicization of the criticism of art in Paris peaked in the years 1944 to 1953, that of architecture was unequaled in the years 1970 to 1990. Art and architecture thus possess independent chronologies, which do not overlap except in the area of public art—a realm in which Paris has experienced ups and downs since 1945. The administration of the city of Paris and that of the state were not always able to find common ground. Moreover, cultural development in the capital



after the war suffered from competition with French cities in the provinces, a key event being the foundation of the Avignon Festival in 1947. The State undertook initiatives to encourage regional development and decentralization laws were passed to ensure an equilibrium between Paris and what would now be called the regions; Paris, however, continued to be where artistic creation was validated in France, even though it had lost some of its former preeminence.

Some historians of the reconstruction, like Bernard Marchand,³ did not hesitate to denounce neglect of the capital as a legacy of provincial ideologies of the Third Republic (and then of the Vichy regime), which were opposed to a revolutionary "Jacobinism." In retrospect it is clear that to weaken Paris was to weaken French culture. In the postwar era the capital did continue to show some signs of independence and an ability to assert itself. Take, for example, the events of May 1968: the outpouring of energy as protest posters were collectively printed at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts (FIG. 9.4) would have a lasting effect on the teaching of art and architecture. It was Paris that led the game, revealing a cultural break with the provinces, as filmmaker Louis Malle illustrated in his 1989 film *Milou in May*.

Artistic life in Paris after World War II seemed more frantic, tense, and competitive than ever before. *Les Trente Glorieuses*—the three decades of growth before the first oil crisis—saw intense but uneven activity in

9.4

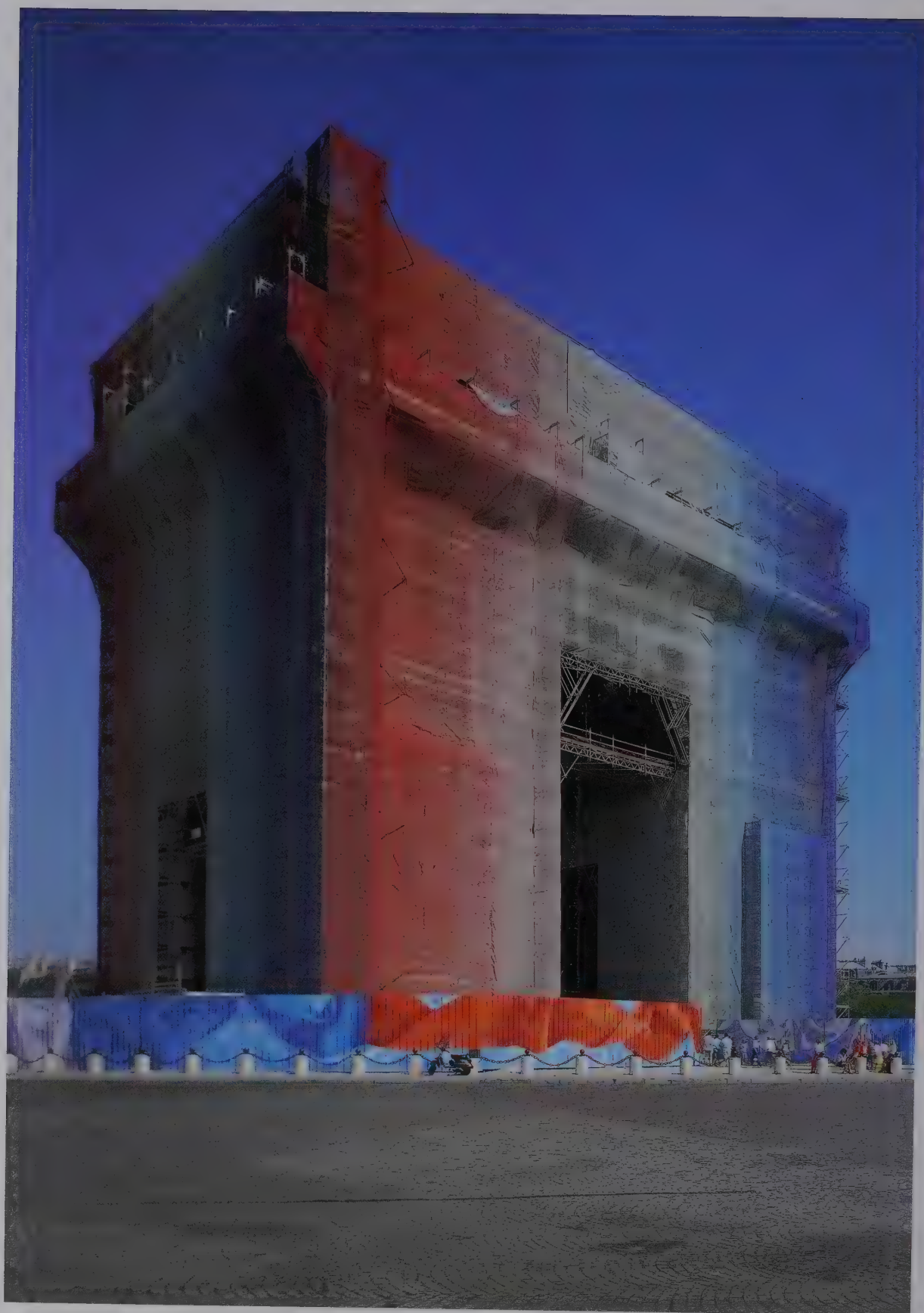
Atelier de l'Ecole
Nationale Supérieure des
Beaux-Arts

*Leave the Fear of Red to
Animals with Horns*,
May 1968

Color silkscreen,
17⁷/₁₆ x 22 in.

(44.3 x 55.8 cm)

Private collection



9.5

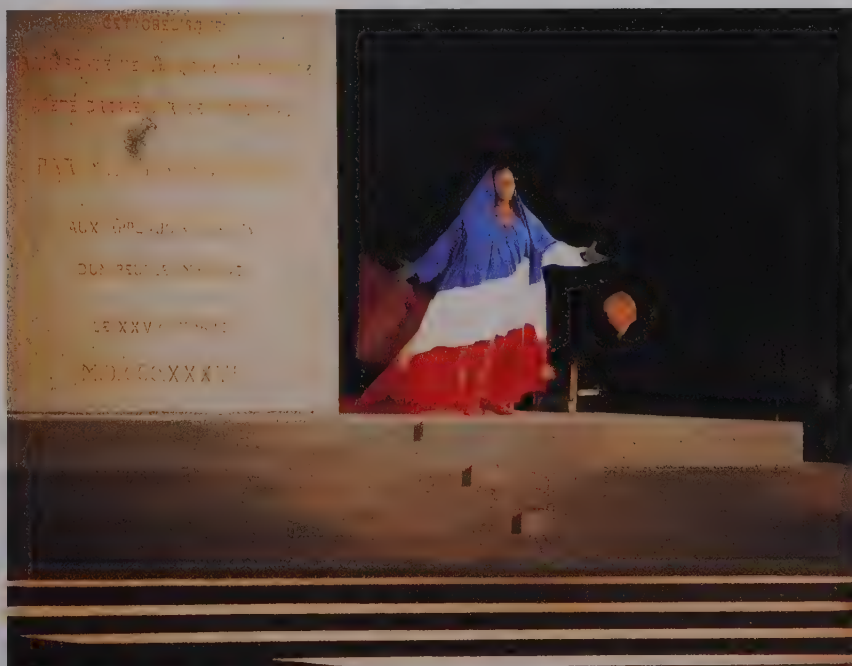
Atelier Catherine Feff
Painted fabric stretched
over scaffolding during
the restoration of the
Arc de Triomphe before
the celebrations for
the bicentennial of the
Revolution, 1988

the visual arts, architecture, and cinema. Partly to blame were the voluntarist policy of André Malraux, minister of culture from 1958 to 1969, and President Georges Pompidou's predilection for large-scale modern construction. Official initiatives accelerated in 1981 with the election of François Mitterrand, thanks to the personal enthusiasm of his minister of culture, Jack Lang. Certain areas might have been more vulnerable than others, but the combination of private interests and state initiatives sustained and then raised the profile of such sectors as furniture design, subject to fluctuations of taste and technologies. Haute couture fought off its impending demise with the help of ready-to-wear clothing, and the heirs of Christian Dior and the New Look—French, English, Italian, and especially Japanese—multiplied in Paris.

The image of Paris changed more rapidly during this half century than ever before. Archaeologists undertook excavations at the very heart of the city; systematic exhibitions on the history of the arrondissements were accompanied by a mass of publications, rich with photographs of old Paris; Parisians mobilized to safeguard an old building in their neighborhood or even an entire *quartier*—all this constituted the particular mindset of the second half of the twentieth century. In 1947 Simone de Beauvoir gloomily noted, “Paris is so small,

so lacking in significance right now.”⁴ A question of mood? On the same date, the writer exclaimed, “Paris is still special.”⁵ Such ambivalence fueled the ferment of art in Paris after World War II, an often equivocal love for a city that ceaselessly haunts the imagination.

Instead of becoming the “dead city” de Beauvoir feared, Paris drew significant strength from its past. In the past half-century it has become a place of commemoration par excellence, hosting “events of memory.” The 1964 ceremony transferring the ashes of the Resistance hero Jean Moulin to the Panthéon, accompanied by André Malraux’s famous speech, was austere; but since the 1980s, set designers, couturiers, and artists have enlivened official celebrations, no less than fireworks designers, electricians, or communication specialists. The *tricouleur* was held high at sporting and cultural events, and even during simple refurbishing, as when the Arc de Triomphe de l’Etoile was covered in a tricolor tarp in 1988 (FIG. 9.5). The splendid parade that Jean-Paul Goude conceived the following year for the bicentennial of the French Revolution would be remembered as an exuberant expression of the desire to enliven the city of memory and maintain it at the height of fashion. Marianne healed of her wounds— isn’t that the image of Jessye Norman intoning “La Marseillaise” in the place de la Concorde?



9.6
Jessye Norman singing
“La Marseillaise,”
place de la Concorde,
July 1989



THE POSTWAR PERIOD (1944 TO THE 1960S)

Ah, Paris, my Paris
She who knows the old songs, who flies into rages
Whose washhouses hold only faded flags
Metropolis bright as the pole star
Paris, not Paris unless the paving stones are torn up

LOUIS ARAGON,
“More Beautiful than Tears” (1942)

The eight years that followed the liberation of Paris in August 1944 constitute a very specific moment in the city’s cultural history. Simone de Beauvoir is a valuable witness to this period, having found herself, with Jean-Paul Sartre, at the center of existentialism, which then set the tone of the Parisian intellectual world (FIG. 9.11). In letters to Nelson Algren or to Jean-Paul Sartre, and later, looking back, in *Les Mandarins* (1954) and *La Force des choses* (1963), she discussed Paris in ways that were as heartfelt as they were paradoxical. Michel Leiris’s journal and the letters of André Masson, Jean Hélion, and Jean Paulhan also allow us to reconstruct the climate of those years.

Beginning in 1945, most of the intellectuals and artists who had been exiled in the United States returned to France to live side by side with those who had stayed in the capital or who had been forced to hide, as well as with the few survivors of the concentration camps like the painter Boris Taslitzky or the writer Robert Antelme, Marguerite Duras’s husband. Duras described the upsetting return to everyday life: “Sometimes I am surprised not to be dead: a frozen lance thrust deep within living flesh, by night and by day, and one survives.”⁶

For many in postwar Paris, planning for the future alternated with disillusionment. Dismal one day, marvelous the next, the city was above all a symbol of regained freedom. But day-to-day difficulties, the economic weakness of the country, and the increasingly oppressive domination of the two powers that would conduct the cold war starting in 1947 led the most clear-sighted to ask themselves whether Paris could regain the leading role it had assumed in the artistic arena between the world wars. The influx of American writers, artists, theater and film people (Orson Welles), and musicians (Bill Coleman and Sidney Bechet)

between 1945 and 1950 did not have the same meaning as when their predecessors adopted Paris in the 1920s. As for the “French rebirth” heralded in the press (especially the then-prevalent Communist papers), it came up against some rather harsh realities. Ration cards continued to be used until 1946, and the Marshall Plan was put in place in 1948. In this context of scarcity, the emblems of the New World—Coca-Cola, above all—seduced even the most virulently anti-American. The art market would experience a change of another kind, perceived by a very small number of people, as operations entirely dominated by American galleries were set up in Paris and other Western European capitals.

One thing was certain: Paris was once again consumed by a fever to create, at least in artistic areas other than architecture. Indeed, although the city had been targeted by air raids between 1942 and 1944 and suffered a fair amount of damage in the battles of the Liberation, the destruction did not approach that of cities like Dunkirk, Saint-Nazaire, Le Havre, or Caen, where everything had to be rebuilt. The politics of reconstruction would not affect Paris as it would London. As a result, the much-needed modernization of the Parisian living environment would not take place before the second half of the 1950s. Lack of comfort was the common lot of ordinary citizens (the myth of the Frenchman who only bathed once a week did not die easily in the American press). In 1946 Beauvoir moved into a small apartment on the rue de la Bûcherie. While she enjoyed the view of the Seine and Notre-Dame, the interior accommodations posed some basic problems. The writer had commissioned two bronze lamps from Alberto Giacometti; just as she was about to turn them on, the electricity went out.⁷ This little detail speaks to a familiar situation in residences of postwar Paris, which was suffering a housing crisis. Some artist’s studios did double duty as

9.7

Brassaï (Gyula Halász)
(1899–1984)

View of François Rude’s
Statue of Maréchal Ney
in the fog, 1932

Silver salt print, 22 $\frac{5}{16}$ x
16 in. (57 x 40.5 cm)
Musée National d’Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

everyday living quarters. At his death in 1947, Pierre Bonnard lived in the Cité des Fusains, unchanged for decades. Brancusi, living in the impasse Ronsin, tenaciously resisted being moved to make way for real estate development in Montparnasse. Man Ray moved into what seemed to his wife to be a “garage,”⁸ located in the rue Férou, which he painted in 1952 and which still recalls Eugène Atget’s or Maurice Utrillo’s views of Paris. After the massive demolitions of the 1950s, artists’ studios began to be constructed only in the 1960s, as an initiative of André Malraux.

Views of Paris

In the days following the victory, the passerby was struck by empty pedestals in Paris’s squares or intersections, where the Germans had melted down statues for their metal. In 1942–43 Picasso had been encouraged to cast in bronze his recent assemblages and older works in plaster as an act of defiance in occupied Paris.⁹ On the eve of his return

to France from exile in Connecticut, André Masson asked his friend Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler if the statue of Marshal Ney by François Rude (a monument embraced by the surrealists in the 1920s) was still there (FIG. 9.7).¹⁰ Yes, the statue was still in place, but how many others had disappeared?

It was not surprising that the taste for “old Paris” prevailed over futuristic expectations. Paris continued to keep body and soul together thanks to its lively markets, the charm of the Luxembourg Gardens, and the excitement of the cafés of Montparnasse and Saint-Germain-des-Prés. In 1944 Jean Dubuffet had painted a faux naïve *Vue de Paris* (private collection), peopled with little black silhouettes against a backdrop of shops with characteristic signage, a Paris of “fashions and novelties,” bakeries, and “wood and charcoal” shops, as in the time of Louis Aragon’s *Paris Peasant* and André Breton’s *Nadja*.

Paris as it had been since 1900 was beloved; the poems of Guillaume Apollinaire and Aragon, sometimes set to music, give us the tone. The Parisian imagination



9.8
Jean Dubuffet
(1901–1985)
A Trip by Métro, 1943
Gouache on paper,
14½ x 12⅞ in.
(37 x 31 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.9

Balthus (Balthazar
Klossowski de Rola)
(1908–2001)

*The Window, Cour
de Rohan*, 1951

Oil on canvas,
59 x 32 $\frac{1}{16}$ in.
(150 x 82 cm)

Musée d'Art Moderne,
Troyes; donation Pierre
et Denise Lévy

9.10

Jean Hélion
(1904–1987)
*Men Reading
Newspapers*, 1947
Oil on canvas,
51 x 76 3/4 in.
(129.5 x 195 cm)
Private collection

was nourished by what was at hand. In the weeks before the Allied landings, Picasso painted the sequence of bridges over the Seine; just after the Liberation, he again took up the motif of views of Notre-Dame. In 1939 Jean Hélion, living in Virginia, wrote in a letter to Raymond Queneau, a true profession of faith in Paris, “a classic place, especially distinctive, for which I am developing an increasing passion,”¹¹ a comment he might have repeated verbatim on his return in 1946. Dubuffet, who had created in 1943 a series of gouaches depicting subway riders (FIG. 9.8), continued to explore the quotidian side of Paris after the war, producing with the writer Jean Paulhan an illustrated book entitled *La Métromanie ou les dessous de la capitale* (Metromania, or the underside of the capital) in 1950, foreshadowing Raymond

Queneau’s more substantial *Zazie dans le métro*, published in 1959. Sad or gay, Paris remained a vital crucible for many artists until the 1950s, as paintings of the city by Balthus, Hélion, and Dubuffet make clear. Balthus’s view of an empty cour de Rohan, where he had his studio (FIG. 9.9), and the anxious silence of his *Passage du Commerce Saint-André* (second version, 1952–54, private collection), suggest an unanswerable melancholy. Hélion selected motifs from his neighborhood and repeated them from one painting to the next, pioneering a Pop Art that did not yet have its theoreticians and which concealed a bit of tragedy, that of the inability to communicate (FIG. 9.10).

The figurative painting of the postwar period, marked by the “era of suspicion” (from Nathalie



Sarraute's *L'Ere du soupçon*, 1956), was infinitely more austere than cultural life as a whole. In 1947 the Paris of artists and intellectuals had a new myth: Saint-Germain-des-Prés. The cafés de Flore and Deux Magots become the sacred grounds of existentialism, which brought together, around de Beauvoir and Sartre (FIGS. 9.11 and 9.12), the staff of the journal *Les Temps modernes* and a host of intellectuals obsessed by the question of freedom, from Maurice Merleau-Ponty to Albert Camus, and including sulfurous newcomers like Jean Genet, Boris Vian, and Violette Leduc. Magazine photos popularized the cellar nightclubs where Juliette Greco became famous and American jazz seduced young night crawlers. In 1949 de Beauvoir agreed to be filmed while writing at the Deux Magots. The film, produced by Marcel Pagliero, with commentary by Raymond Queneau, also featured the Saint-Yves and songs from the turn of the century, as well as Boris Vian and his trumpet.

The New Theater

Vian was among those who participated in the remarkable flowering of theater in Paris in the 1950s. In fact, for a period of almost twenty years after the war, Paris became the international center of new developments in theater. Parisian stages had not been empty during the occupation, when some of the smaller ones that would support the "new theater" were already active. From 1944 to 1960, about twenty-three of these "petites scènes" sprang up: independent theaters, sparsely equipped and occupying places like garages or disused warehouses. Subventions from the State were usually lacking, though the program "Aide à la première pièce" (support for a first play), instituted by the State in 1950, made possible the production of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*, now regarded as the masterpiece of the Theater of the Absurd, a term coined by Martin

9.11 (below, left)
Robert Doisneau
(1912–1994)
Simone de Beauvoir
writing at the Café des
Deux Magots, 1944

9.12 (below)
Brassaï (Gyula Halász)
(1899–1984)
Sartre at the Café
de Flore, lighting a
cigarette, c. 1945





9.13
Henri-Jacques Huet,
Paulette Frantz,
O. Barrois, Claude
Mansard, Nicolas
Bataille, and Simone
Mozet in Eugène
Ionesco's *The Bald
Soprano*, Théâtre
des Noctambules,
May 1950

Esslin. This “new theater,” as the French called it, was a playwright’s theater, a philosophical theater, stripped down to essential elements. The plays, by Beckett, Eugene Ionesco, and others, are characterized by situations—frequently incomprehensible—rather than narrative, and earthy or banal language, in place of the elevated rhetoric of the classic French theater. Their poetry would emerge not in sonorous phrases, but, as Esslin writes, “from the concrete and objectified images of the stage itself.”¹² This theater thus paralleled trends in art that emphasized the inherent expressiveness of materials in place of the representational means traditionally valued.

Just as Paris continued to attract avant-garde visual artists from around the world, it now also became a magnet for foreign playwrights and theater artists. Beckett and Ionesco, the two most influential figures, had arrived before the war, the Irishman transplanted to Paris in

1937, while Ionesco, who had spent time in the city as a child, fled rising fascism in Rumania in 1938 to settle permanently in Paris. Ionesco’s first plays were not produced until 1950, however, when *The Bald Soprano*, at the Théâtre des Noctambules, initially dismissed by critics, became a word-of-mouth success (FIG. 9.13) and continued to be played for years and years. Ionesco’s early one-acts derived in part from his own experience as an immigrant encountering the mysteries and banalities of a new culture. Speaking in platitudes and non-sequiturs, his characters consistently fail to communicate. In *The Lesson* (1951), a raving professor ultimately kills the young girl he is teaching. In *The Chairs* (1952), two old people make conversation with nonexistent guests. As radically opposed to the tradition of naturalism as to that of the “Boulevard,” the “anti-theater” of Ionesco’s plays relies on minimal staging, which emphasizes its

ironical, sometimes exhilarating nonsense. Also in 1950 Arthur Adamov, Georges Schehadé (from Lebanon), and Boris Vian produced their first plays.

Samuel Beckett had four of his plays directed by Roger Blin, a student and friend of Antonin Artaud, and one of the most brilliant director-actors in this period: *Waiting for Godot* in January 1953 at the Théâtre de Babylone (FIG. 9.14), *Endgame* in 1957, *Krapp's Last Tape* in 1960, and *Happy Days*, performed by Madeleine Renaud, to inaugurate the "Petite Salle" of the Odéon-Théâtre de France in 1963 (FIG. 9.15). Blin made use of "alienation" techniques introduced by the German playwright and director Bertolt Brecht, who wrote a kind of political theater, without elevated classical rhetoric. His ideas were enormously influential in the 1960s.

Jean Vilar was the first director on the Parisian scene to employ Brecht's technique of alienation, whose aim is to distance the audience from an emotional response, in order to increase its capacity to critically analyze the social and political injustices depicted in his plays (FIG. 9.16). When the Festival d'Art Dramatique in Avignon was initiated in 1947 as an "Art Week," Vilar was its first director. In 1951 the State Secretary for Fine Arts, André Cornu, assisted by Jeanne Laurent for the theater, offered him the direction of the Théâtre National Populaire (National Popular Theater) in the Palais of Chaillot. The same year, he produced Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* at the Festival of Theater in Suresnes, a commune of the western suburbs of Paris. Brecht's company, the Berliner Ensemble, founded in East Berlin in 1949, performed *Mother Courage* in 1954 at the Théâtre de l'Odéon on the occasion of the Paris International Festival; Vilar produced the play a second time at the TNP in 1959, then in 1960 undertook *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, Brecht's satiric account of Hitler's march to power.

Working with strong personalities such as Germaine Montero or Maria Casarès, and casting some of the most talented young actors of the time, such as Gérard



9.14 (above, right)
Scene from Roger Blin's
production of Samuel
Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*,
Théâtre de Babylone, 1952

9.15 (right)
Madeleine Renaud in Roger
Blin's production of Samuel
Beckett's *Happy Days*,
Odéon-Théâtre de France,
October 1963



9.16 (above)
Jean Vilar's production
of André Gide's *Oedipus
Rex* at the Théâtre
National Populaire de
Chaillot, 1951

Philippe, Christiane Minazzoli, and Catherine Sellers, Vilar made the TNP a popular destination. Its stage in the basement of the Palais de Chaillot was considered as a model at the time it was built in 1937. The first large thrust stage in Paris (33 meters wide), with almost 2,800 seats in the auditorium, it was a considerable improvement on the theater "à l'italienne." Vilar's repertoire was, on the one hand, plays of the classical French and romantic periods, which his company rendered in a fresh and modern way, and, on the other hand, contemporary creations, by the playwrights Genet, Beckett, Adamov, T. S. Eliot, and Brecht. The staging and costumes were very simple, one might say "minimalist." This was also the favored approach in the private small theaters in Paris, although sometimes a more baroque or realistic style was employed. Highly regarded painters like Jean Bazaine, Edouard Pignon, André Acquard, Léon

Gischia, Mario Prassinos, and Balthus, the architect Emile Aillaud, and famous set designers of the prewar period, including Pavel Tchelitchev, Christian Bérard, and Félix Labisse, did regularly sketches for costumes and settings at the TNP. Alexander Calder himself made the sets and costumes for a great TNP production in 1952, Henri Pichette's *Nucléa*, an angry denunciation of the atomic bomb.

Before the war, the "new theater" had been anticipated in certain respects by the first directing effort of Jean-Louis Barrault, a product of the atelier of Charles Dullin. Barrault's 1935 staging of *Autour d'une mère*, adapted from William Faulkner's novel *As I Lay Dying*, relied on sounds, music, and pantomime. In 1946 Barrault and Madeleine Renaud created a company at the Théâtre Marigny, where he performed the *Parade of Baptiste*, the mime show played by the the great

nineteenth-century mime Jean-Gaspard Deburau, which *The Children of Paradise* put on the screen with Barrault in the part of Baptiste. They also staged a *Hamlet*, which benefited from André Masson's costumes and sets. Beginning in 1942, Barrault had taken on another challenge: to stage the plays of Paul Claudel. He directed five of them and was considered the definitive interpreter of Claudel. He brought together an outstanding cast, including Alain Cuny, Catherine Sellers, and Laurent Terzieff, in his 1959 production of *Tête d'Or*; General de Gaulle attended the premiere at the Théâtre de France, the new name of the Théâtre de l'Odéon, whose direction Barrault had assumed at André Malraux's request. For *Tête d'Or*, which had a large success in France through the radio, André Masson did sumptuous costumes and sets, and Pierre Boulez, a close friend of Masson and Barrault, completed Arthur Honegger's score. This fruitful collaboration was renewed on the occasion of Barrault's production of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck* at the Opéra in 1963, conducted by Boulez, with costumes and set by Masson. Such productions brought the French stage to a high level of excellence, but ironically contributed to widening the gap between the intellectual and the popular theater in Paris.

Jean Genet had initiated the new kind of dramaturgy with *The Maids*, staged by the great prewar director Louis Jouvet at the Théâtre de l'Athénée in April 1947 (FIG. 9.17). Blin's 1959 production of Genet's *The Blacks* at the Théâtre de Lutèce would mark yet another turning point, this time toward a more overtly politicized theater, which dominated the 1960s (FIG. 9.18). The performance was so provocative that even Ionesco is said to have walked out. Subtitled "Clown Show" (*Clownerie*) the play opened with a group of blacks, performed by a cast of unknown black actors, in a courtroom facing the coffin of a white woman they have killed. But it soon transpires that nothing is quite what it seems. By the use of "play-within-a-play" devices, inherited from Pirandello's avant-garde theater of the 1930s, and other



9.17 (above, right)
Yvette Etiévant and Monique Mélinand in Jean Genet's *The Maids*, Théâtre de l'Athénée, 1947



9.18 (right)
Jean Genet's *The Blacks*, directed by Roger Blin, Théâtre de Lutèce, 1959

9.19

Poster for *Les Enfants du Paradis* (*The Children of Paradise*), 1945

Lithograph
Bibliothèque Forney

means to distance viewers from the action, Genet, like Brecht, encouraged reflection on the social and political issues raised by the play; aiming “to create discomfort,” as he explains in his notes on how to play *The Maids*. André Acquart made a set consisting of metallic scaffolding. The following year’s production of Genet’s *The Balcony* was staged by the British director Peter Brook. Brook would settle in Paris in 1974, restoring the Théâtre des Bouffes du Nord and quickly becoming a powerful presence in French theater, along with other personalities like Antoine Vitez, Patrice Chéreau, and Ariane Mnouchkine, all of whom established their careers outside Paris, a fact which reflects the city’s

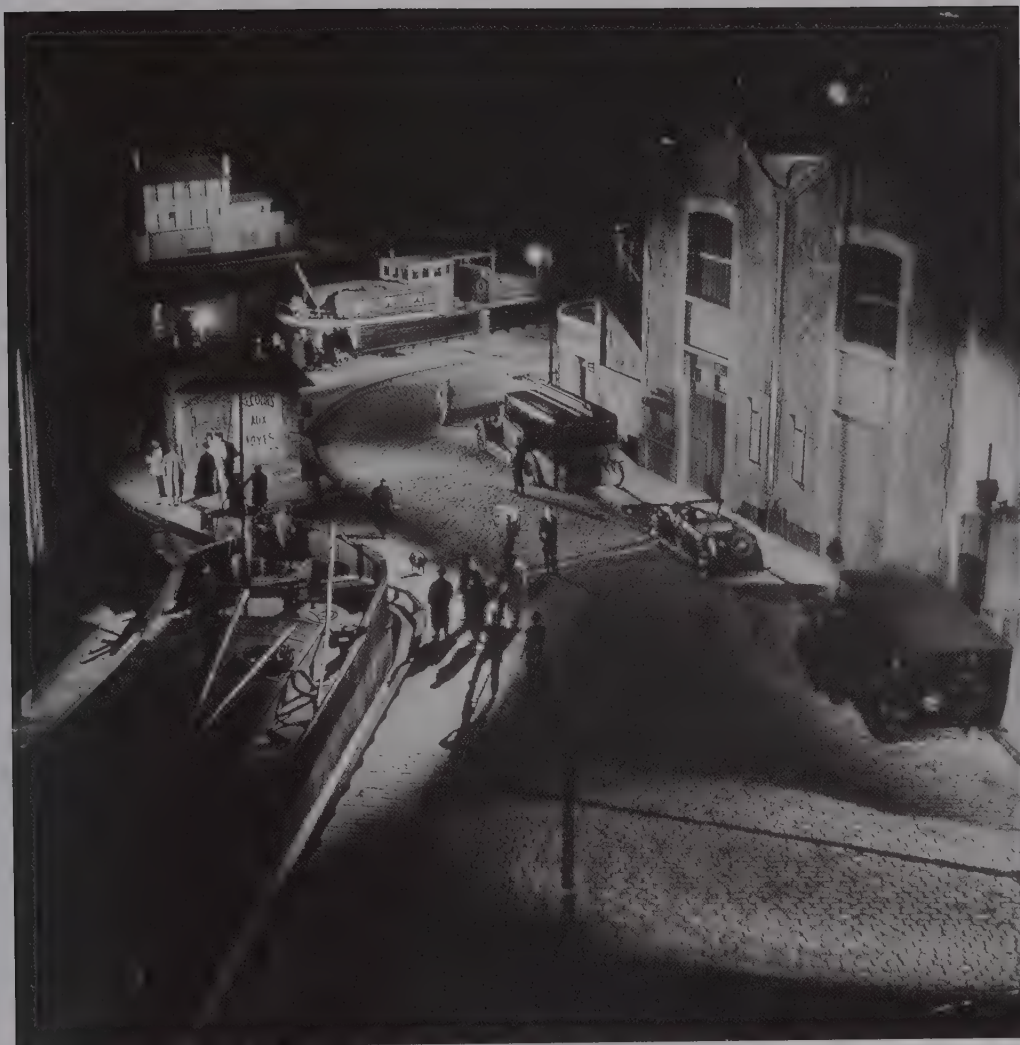
altered position in the cultural geography of the last twenty-five years of the twentieth century.

Cinema in Paris/Paris in Cinema

Cinema attempted to reassert its position after the war. Having resisted the occupation and its censorship, French film was suddenly faced with a brutal international commercial challenge in 1945, as the American film industry benefited from favorable export conditions thanks to the Blum-Byrnes Agreements, which were signed in Washington in 1946, and renegotiated in Paris in 1948. In this renegotiated agreement, five weeks of each trimester were reserved in France for French films, the rest of the year being opened to films from other countries; those which came from the United States were, of course, the most numerous. Professional and technical norms were fixed by the CNC (Centre national de la cinématographie), created on October 25, 1946. Most important, 1948 saw a vote on the first *loi d’aide* for the French cinema, to support indigenous production through a 7 percent tax on ticket receipts. An official accord with Italy in 1949 extended the possibilities of the co-productions. The Cannes International Festival, whose first production had been interrupted in 1939, was revived in 1946 as a showplace for alternatives to Hollywood production.

After the war, French film became thoroughly Parisian, and Paris became its essential subject. Cinema had witnessed the struggle to free Paris, filmed by Jacques Becker, and his film was the first to be shown in the liberated capital. But the great success of the cinema of the Liberation was Marcel Carné’s *Children of Paradise*, with Arletty and Barrault, which started production in August 1943. Since the Germans refused to allow the film to be shot in actual locations or at night, supposedly because of the curfew, it was made in a studio, on Alexandre Trauner’s superb sets. With its intense nostalgia for the popular Paris of the 1840s, this story of betrayal and of dreaming that resolves itself in drama seemed to predict the fate of an “old Paris” that did not want to die. By prohibiting dances and popular entertainments, the occupation had deprived the capital of festivity; in all respects, *The Children of Paradise* reconnected with the past. In his 1946 poster for the film,





9.20

Marcel Carné
(1909–1996), director,
Raymond Voinquel
(1912–1994),
photographer

Production view,
Marcel Carné's
Les Portes de la nuit
(*The Gates of Night*),
1946



9.21

Georges Franju,
(1912–1987)

Film still from
Le Sang des bêtes
(*The Blood
of Beasts*), 1948



9.22

Vincente Minnelli
(1903–1986)

Marie Antoinette
Andrews and Gene Kelly
in *An American in
Paris*, 1951

Hervé Morvan adopted a pared-down style, characteristic of the transition between Art Deco and the notion of “direct access” developed in the 1950s by poster artists such as Raymond Gid, René Gruau, Bernard Villemot, and Raymond Savignac, who later did the posters for Robert Bresson’s films.

The names Becker, Carné, Jacques Prévert, and Alexandre Trauner are inseparable from the image of liberated Paris, as if the struggle for the freedom of the capital were one with the battle for a French cinema. It is in this context of “positive nostalgia” that the major films of the postwar period should be considered, films such as Robert Bresson’s *Les Dames du bois de Boulogne* of 1945, where the edge of the lake, as the historian Jean Douchet has said, composes “the only Parisian place that lends its presence to a film in which everything is reduced to its essence.”¹³ In 1946 Trauner again joined

forces with Carné, designing the set of *Portes de la nuit* (FIG. 9.20): the above-ground Métro and the Barbès station, reconstructed in the studios of Joinville, would become key images in the evolution of French cinema. Though the film was not an immediate success, critics saw in it a “new and violent vision of Paris worn by hardship, corrupted by black markets, its popular freshness withered.”¹⁴

Paris cinema became the most active propagandist for the capital, alternating between nostalgia, as in Claude Autant-Lara’s 1947 adaptation of *Diable au corps*, with Gérard Philipe, which evoked the Paris of World War I, and an engagement with everyday reality, most notoriously in Georges Franju’s 1948 *Le Sang des bêtes* (FIG. 9.21), filmed at La Villette in the slaughterhouses that would disappear twenty years later. Jacques Becker’s *Rendez-vous de juillet* (1949) described the youthful



milieu of Saint-Germain-des-Prés and Montparnasse, where the filmmaker rediscovered his memories as a jazz lover through his own children; “real life” consisted of listening to Claude Luter and his orchestra at the bar Le Lorientais. At stake, behind each story, each backdrop, was the modernity of French cinema, which all intellectuals at the time considered to be true, fearless, and human—in contrast to what Hollywood produced.

In the 1950s, however, cinematic visions of Paris became conventional, even in the hands of the most brilliant filmmakers: in *An American in Paris* (1951), filmed in the United States, Vincente Minnelli had Gene Kelly dance in sets inspired by paintings by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, the Douanier Rousseau, and Raoul Dufy (FIG. 9.22); and Julien Duvivier filmed a Bastille Day celebration that redeployed the common clichés of the populist genre in *La Fête à Henriette* (1952). In *Si Paris m'était*

conté (1956), Sacha Guitry repeated a recipe proven before the war in such films as *Si Versailles m'était conté*. Jean Renoir created a more interesting version of such films à costume with *French Can-can* (1955; FIG. 9.23). Reportedly Renoir's own favorite among his films, it is about an aging impresario (Jean Gabin) reviving the cancan at an old Montmartre nightclub, which is being refurbished as the Moulin Rouge. But it would be up to the New Wave to rethink the role of Paris in film, as well as the potentials of film itself.

The term New Wave (*nouvelle vague*) is credited generally to writer and journalist Françoise Giroud in *L'Express* in October 1957. It burst onto the film scene between 1956 and 1960, as a group of young film enthusiasts, tutored by André Bazin, cofounder of the influential magazine *Cahiers du cinéma* in 1951, were let loose in a film industry that had been shaken up

9.23

Jean Renoir (1894–1979)
Jean Gabin, Maria Felix,
and Françoise Arnoul in
French Can-can, 1955

9.24

François Truffaut
(1932–1984)

Jean-Pierre Léaud, Claire
Maurier, Albert Remy,
and Guy Decomble
from *The 400 Blows*,
1959

by the commercial success of Roger Vadim's conventional but sexy *Et Dieu créa la femme*, starring Brigitte Bardot. François Truffaut, Jean-Luc Godard, Eric Rohmer, Jacques Rivette, and Claude Chabrol are considered the principal members of this group. Agnès Varda and Alain Resnais might be added to the list. Taking Paris as their studio, they also contributed sketches to anthology films, like the "Antoine et Colette" episode written by

Truffaut for *Love at Twenty* (1962), in which Truffaut also appeared. Sometimes they supported each other financially: Rivette's first long film *Paris Belongs to Us* (filmed in 1958, released in 1961) was produced by the small production companies Carrosse and Ajym, which Truffaut and Chabrol established respectively. Sometimes these filmmakers collaborated on a screenplay and one of them finally directed it: the history of Godard's



first long film, *Breathless* (1959, FIG. 9.25), begins in late 1956, when Chabrol and Truffaut attempted to write a scenario on the basis of a news item that Truffaut had read.

Godard's jump cuts and unsteady, handheld shots did as much to revolutionize the look of cinema as Truffaut's personal approach did to reshape its content. In 1959 Truffaut directed his own first feature, the autobiographical *400 Blows* (FIG. 9.24), introducing Jean-Pierre L  aud as the troubled, misunderstood boy that Truffaut himself had been and initiating a director-actor collaboration that would continue well into the 1970s. *The 400 Blows* became the key film of the New Wave after his triumph at the 1959 Cannes Festival, where it became obvious that something radical was changing the French cinema.

The New Wave would not have found an audience without the ground having been prepared by the writings of the filmmakers—many of whom began their careers as critics—and others close to the movement, such as Fran  oise Sagan, Nathalie Sarraute, Marg  rite Duras, and Alain Robbe-Grillet. The magazine *Cahiers du cin  ma* offered them a forum. Truffaut's 1954 article "A certain trend in French cinema," now referred to as a historical manifesto, attacks the "tradition of quality" and the system of psychological realism and cinematicized novels which dominated French films from 1945 on. He and his friends insisted that making cinema is an *art*, far from industrial entertainment, and that the director is equivalent to the author of an art work (hence, the famous "auteur theory," adopted by young film-school-educated directors of the 1960s and 1970s). Above all, the New Wave broke with the technical traditions of the artificial studio. Filming in the open air, among passersby in Parisian streets, called for a radical new conception of lighting and equipment (a light camera, carried on the shoulder, for example). The filmmakers highlighted the personality of the actor, who was often less a hero than an anti-hero in their films. For instance, Jean-Paul Belmondo is seen with his back to the camera as he runs in the rue Campagne Premi  re before he is shot at the end of *Breathless*.

Eric Rohmer, who succeeded Bazin (who died in 1958) at *Cahiers du cin  ma*, was also a critic at the beginning of the 1950s. His first long film *Sign of Leo*, filmed in Paris, which failed on its release in 1962, is

recognized now as a fine example of the new cinema.

In 1962 he began releasing films in series, the first being his "Six Moral Tales." The first two of these, *La Boulang  re de Monceau* (1962) and *Suzanne's Profession* (1963) were both filmed in Paris, the first on boulevard Saint Michel, the second on rue de Levis. The title character of *Nad  a    Paris* (1964) is a young student living at the Cit   internationale universitaire on Boulevard Jourdan, though Rohmer also has an eye turned toward Breton's *Nadja* as a symbol of the surprising encounter. Agn  s Varda first attempted to overturn the established norms for French cinema with *La Pointe courte*, filmed in the seaport of S  te in 1955—a film often regarded as a forerunner of the New Wave. In 1962, her first feature,

9.25

Jean-Luc Godard
(b. 1930)

Jean-Paul Belmondo in
   bout de souffle
(*Breathless*), 1959



9.26

Victor Brauner
(1903–1966)

Triumph of Doubt, 1946

Oil, ink, and wax on
canvas, 32 1/6 x 29 1/6 in.

(81.9 x 101.1 cm)

Private collection

Cléo from 5 to 7, used Paris's streets as emblematic natural settings, introduced a new conception of narrative time: the ninety minutes of the film correspond to ninety crucial minutes of the life of Cléo, a character played by Corinne Marchand. Varda intends to grasp the "millions of details" that one sees when walking in Paris, as opposed to the picturesque or the "super Paris," as she puts it.¹⁵

Producers did not pay much attention to the New Wave, except for Pierre Braunberger (well-known for

having backed films by René Clair and Jean Renoir in the twenties), who produced such original short films as Alain Resnais's *Toute la mémoire du monde* (1956), a wonderful documentary showing unknown parts of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Godard's *Tous les garçons s'appellent Patrick* (1957), then, in the 1960s, other short films by Maurice Pialat, François Reichenbach, Jean Rouch, and Chris Marker. Short films were encouraged by a 1953 law, which took effect in 1955. At a time of intrusive censorship due to the Algerian war,



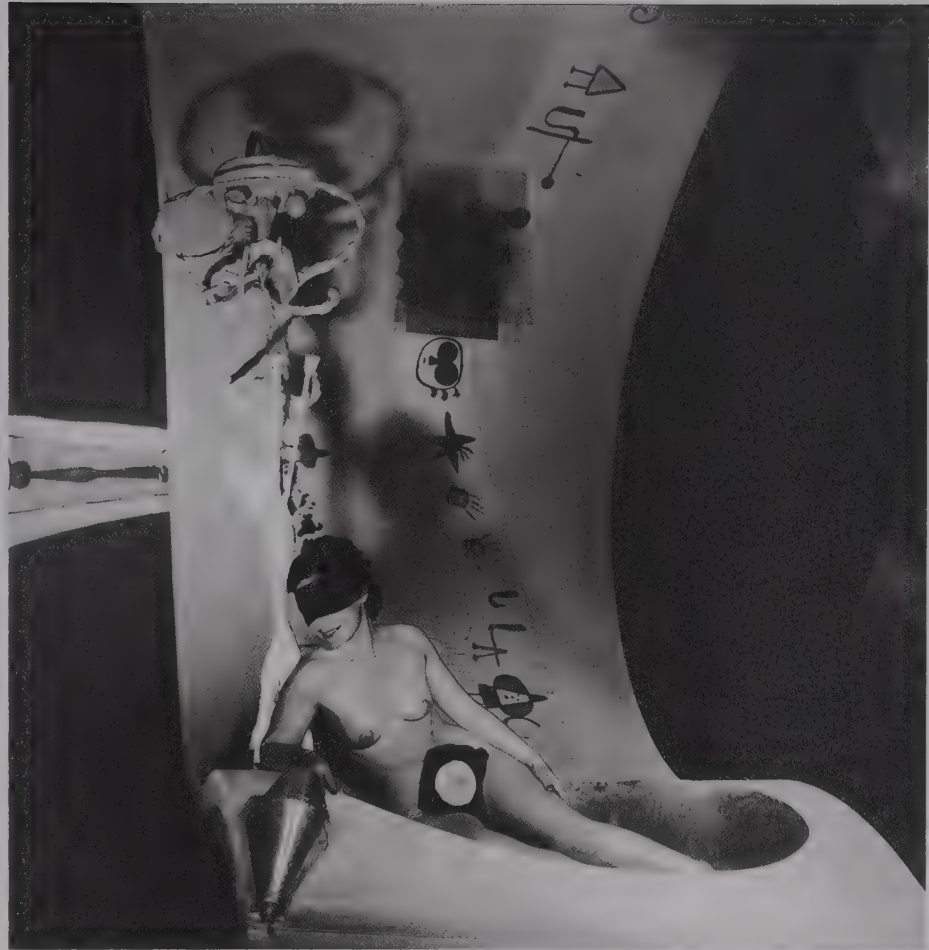
some French documentary filmmakers bravely treated social and controversial subjects. Alain Resnais's *Nuit et brouillard* (1955) contributed in the development of historical research on French collaboration with the Germans during World War II and the extermination camps. Between 1956 and the mid-1960s, a true cultural revolution was realized in Paris, whose impact was felt throughout the world; this revolution was on film.

The Paris of the Surrealists

Did the Paris of the surrealists still exist after the war? While existentialism took center stage, surrealism—Parisian in origin—had long since become an international movement. Moreover, from 1940 to 1945, its principal French actors had lived in exile in the United States. The impact of the French exiles in New York has long been emphasized, but one tends to forget about their return to France, nourished by a culture out of sync with the Paris of the time.

Upon his return to Paris with the Cuban painter Wifredo Lam in 1946, for example, André Breton found a very different situation from that of 1940. The young surrealists of the group *La Main à Plume*, who had attempted to start a journal under the occupation, had not managed to reach him in New York. The movement had to contend with new competitors: in 1945, while Aragon rescued *Les Lettres françaises* from obscurity, Jean-Paul Sartre created the review *Les Temps modernes*, and in 1946 Georges Bataille started *Critique* and Jean Paulhan founded *Les Cahiers de la Pléiade*. In 1947 Breton nevertheless managed to organize the first large international surrealist exhibition of the postwar period in Paris, at Galerie Maeght, with Marcel Duchamp. Having recently published the collection of poems *Arcane 17*, he favored in this exhibition the themes of alchemy, tarot, and the initiatory tradition. Love and magic were the predominant motifs in surrealism after 1945; in 1958–59 *Eros*, the penultimate international surrealist exhibition, would testify to the durability of sexuality and dreams as the foundations of surrealist poetics, in spite of the tumult surrounding individuals and ideologies.

Breton's lofty ideological polemics before the war rapidly devolved, after the war, to a confrontation between

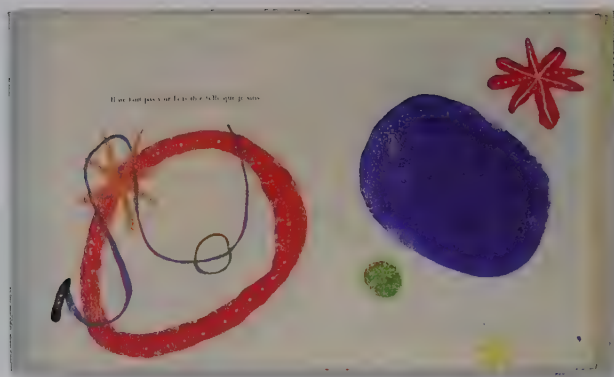


Trotskyites, communists, and anarchists. Trotskyites and anarchists opposed each other bitterly, but without the epic inspiration that had animated such conflicts in the 1930s. In 1947 the tract *Rupture inaugurale* marked the schism with the Communist Party; ties with the neo-Dadaism of a Tristan Tzara (who entered the Communist Party) or a Bryen were broken; the rapprochement with Dubuffet in the context of Art Brut fell apart again between 1946 and 1949. After Artaud's return from the Rodez asylum in 1946, he was encouraged to present a program in January 1947 at the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, which ended incoherently in sobbing and screaming. Breton attacked Artaud for making a fool of himself and Artaud responded by definitively ending their long, troubled relationship.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the movement, recognized throughout the world, attracted to Paris many young artists who, at times, had difficulties in their own countries, like the Hungarians Jindrich

9.27

Frederick Kiesler
(1890–1965)

Salle des Superstitions
in the Exposition
Internationale du
Surréalisme, with
"cascade" by Joan Miró
(1893–1983),
Galerie Maeght, 1947
Galerie Maeght



9.28
Joan Miró (1893–1983)
Illustration for a volume
by various artists and
authors, *Poésie de mots
inconnus* (Paris: Moulrot
Frères, 1949)

Heisler and Marie Toyen, then Simon Hantaï and Judit Reigl, the Haitian Hippolyte, the Brazilian sculptor Maria Martins, and the young Algerian who called herself Baya. But the group continued to be poisoned by tracts, manifestoes, and exclusions. The expulsion of Roberto Matta in 1948 provoked the departure of Victor Brauner (FIG. 9.26), who was nevertheless very close to Breton. One of his works presented at the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme of 1947, *Les Amoureux messagers du nombre* (1947; private collection), contained the number 1734, in which Breton visually recomposed his own initials, AB. As for Matta, his impressive and colorful work—paintings, etchings, and also large murals—was imbued by cosmological, visionary patterns. The circularity of the myths within the movement remained one of its great strengths, its disavowal of people its greatest weakness.

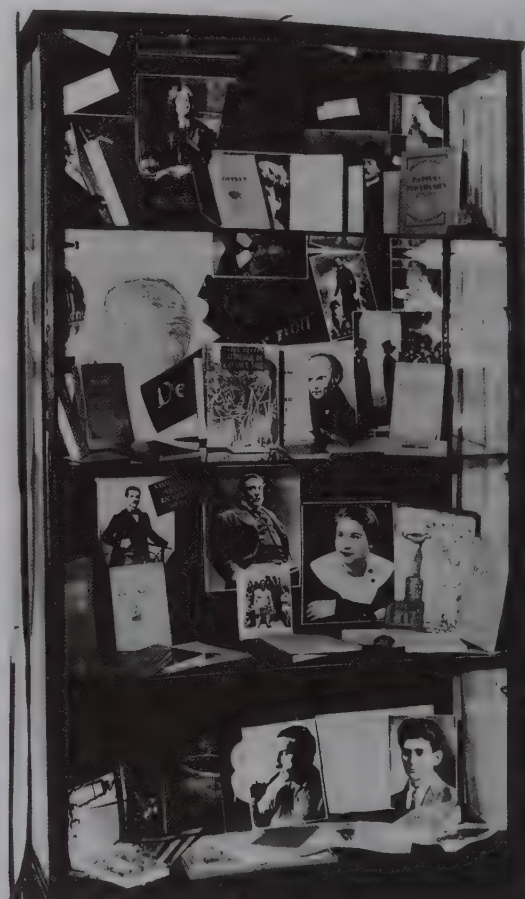
The 1947 exhibition was to have been a place to regroup for a new departure; it was also a retrospective of ideas magnified by the New York exile. Frederick J. Kiesler came from New York to direct the production, following a concept developed by Duchamp and Breton.

It included a “Salle de Pluie et de Dédale” (Room of rain and mazes), a “Salle des Superstitions” (FIG. 9.27), and three “altars,” among them a *Grand Transparent* by Jacques Hérold, an idea that came from the United States. For the cover of the luxury edition of the catalogue, Duchamp produced, with the help of Enrico Donati, a breast whose sensual character was reinforced by the instruction “*Prière de toucher*” (Please touch; FIG. 9.29).

This catalogue exemplified one of the most remarkable surrealist activities, the publishing of books-as-objects, triggered by the return to Paris of exiled artists who were determined to make the handcrafted artist’s book the most beautiful and exotic of luxury productions. Particular attention was paid to typography, posters, and display, where a deliberately odd style reigned (FIG. 9.28). While Marcel Duchamp’s experiments in this domain were forged in New York, André Breton found an ally in Paris: Bernard Gheerbrant, director of the bookstore La Hune, who devoted its display windows to work by writers, poets, and artists. In 1946, in homage to Marcel

9.29 (right)
Marcel Duchamp
(1887–1968)
Le Surréalisme en 1947
Catalogue of the
Exposition
Internationale du
Surréalisme 1947 (Paris:
Galerie Maeght, 1947)

9.30 (far right)
Case display for
Breton’s *L’Anthologie
de l’humour noir*
(*Anthology of Black
Humor*), 1947
Arranged by Bernard
Gheerbrant at the
Exposition Internationale
du Surréalisme at
Galerie Maeght





Duchamp, Breton presented *Box in a Valise* (1941), *Bottle Rack* (1914), *Rotoreliefs* (1925 and 1935), and numerous documents. The following year, at the Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme, Bernard Gheerbrant set up a display case devoted to the authors featured in Breton's *Anthologie de l'humour noir* (FIG. 9.30).

The surrealist city had not lost its sway entirely, but Breton and his associates lived in the nostalgia of a prewar Paris and did not have the slightest affinity with the one that was emerging. Their 1951 proposition to "erect statues to Alice in Wonderland"¹⁷ to decorate the capital seemed both passé and juvenile. The cinema now maintained the magic of places and monuments, developing the theme of strolling through the city and making incongruous associations. Paris had become the playground of Jacques and Pierre Prévert, the *enfants terribles* of anticlerical and populist humor. The latter produced a short film in 1946, *Voyage-Surprise*, about which the film historian Ado Kyrrou, an associate of surrealism, said, "Juggling with life, which they turn upside-down," they "sow revolt in the squares of Paris."¹⁸

It was not until the 1960s that audiences would see films marked by a kind of fantasy that one could regard as more or less surrealist. The career of Luis Buñuel, whose *Andalusian Dog* (see FIG. 8.68), made in Paris in 1929, and *L'Âge d'or* (1930) were both widely recognized as archetypal Surrealist films, epitomizes the late flowering of surrealism in cinema. After the

war, when Buñuel was living and working in Mexico, he sent *El* (1952) to the Cannes festival, where it was poorly received. The filmmaker returned to Europe in 1955, for the filming of *Cela s'appelle l'Aurore*, but it was not until 1963 that he initiated, in Paris, the series of late masterpieces that begins with *Le Journal d'une femme de chambre*. *The Phantom of Liberty* (1974), his most anarchic and funniest film, was followed by *That Obscure Object of Desire* (1977), the most "Parisian" of Buñuel's postwar films and also his last (FIG. 9.31). The revenge of a reality more cruel than the creations of the imagination, the reign of an absurdity transcending poetry, is seen at the end of the film when a shop window of female lingerie, situated in one of the *passages* of Paris is blown up by a terrorist bomb.

In the last months of the occupation, Maurice Nadeau wrote his *History of Surrealism*. In a 1964 postscript, he explained that after World War II, the surrealist movement "had in a certain way played out its historic role." The 1968 exhibition *Dada, Surrealism and their Heritage*, organized by William S. Rubin at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, took an even more radical view, situating the end of the movement in 1947. However, this neglected a central fact: the 1960s were glory years for surrealism, rediscovered and appropriated by a younger generation. An international exhibition of surrealism in Paris in 1965, *L'Ecart absolu* (Absolute divergence), and the subsequent death of André Breton

9.31

Luis Buñuel
(1900–1983)

Fernando Rey and
Carole Bouquet in
*That Obscure Object
of Desire*, 1977

in 1966 caused unexpected reverberations, and surrealism has continued to nourish successive artistic generations right up to the present, photographers in particular.

Reconstituting the Nation's Museums

In *The Train*, a French-American film made in 1964, John Frankenheimer reconstructed the rescue of trunks of Renoirs, Gauguins, and Picassos taken from the Musée du Jeu de Paume by the Germans who, despite the advance of the Allies, had tried to send the stolen art to their country in a train. The adventure was tragic, since it ended in the shooting of hostages, notably the railway workers who had dared to reroute the train to save the paintings. Their sacrifice had broad national implications: national rebirth required the reconstitution of the nation's museums, its artistic patrimony. This included contemporary works, some of which were destroyed by the Germans as "degenerate art."

The collections of the Musée du Louvre had been safeguarded in the provinces according to a plan developed in 1938 and carried out by Jaujard as director of national museums, with the active participation of curators and the support of individuals who harbored the collections, at first in Chambord. After the Germans occupied Paris and in proportion as the air raids increased, the art was moved to various châteaux in the Loire Valley and finally to other refuges, such as Mautauban, Saint-Laurent-lès-Tours, and Montal, near Saint-Céré, in the Lot. This cooperation united a generation of curators with cultural administrators in Paris after the Liberation.

In August 1944 the provisional government of the Republic appointed as director of fine arts Joseph Billiet, a Communist who had been a gallery director in the 1930s, and in November a new Direction des Arts et Lettres was created within the Ministry of National Education and entrusted to Jacques Jaujard. It supervised five departments, two of which still exist: the Direction des Arts Plastiques and the Direction des Musées de France. The latter went to Georges Salles—honored, like Jaujard, as a civil servant who had taken risks during the Occupation. Salles immediately set about effecting a rapprochement between the institutional milieu and artists such as Matisse, Picasso, and Braque.

Following the end of the war, he hastened the open-

ing and reopening of museums. The cultural climate in 1945 encouraged the rediscovery of medieval art with the inauguration of the Musée de la Fresque at the Palais de Chaillot and the Bayeux Tapestry exhibition at the Louvre. The following year, the Orangerie showed its *Recovered Masterpieces* exhibition (recovered from the Germans, that is), though no one yet knew the extent of the pillage of the collections of Jewish families. In 1947 the Musée de l'Impressionisme was inaugurated at the Jeu de Paume, and the Musée National d'Art Moderne, which had been partially opened in the summer of 1942 at the Palais de Tokyo, was reopened under the direction of Jean Cassou, who recovered his status of curator. In 1946 it exhibited *Art et Résistance*, organized by the Association des Anciens Francs-Tireurs et Partisans (the Communist branch of the Resistance), a show that then traveled to London and New York but was refused in Moscow.

In 1951 the position of State Secretary for Fine Arts was reestablished and entrusted to André Cornu, who was at times reproached for a lack of innovation in his policies. His administration oversaw a period of decentralization of museums that lasted until 1963. The cities of Grenoble, Saint-Etienne, and Lyons would soon compete with Paris in their acquisition of modern painting. For many, modern art meant Cubism. Making abstract painting and sculpture known to the public thus demanded considerable tenacity. As for the art of young painters and sculptors, it did without museums, and its diffusion depended mainly on annual Salons and small galleries.

L'Art Engagé

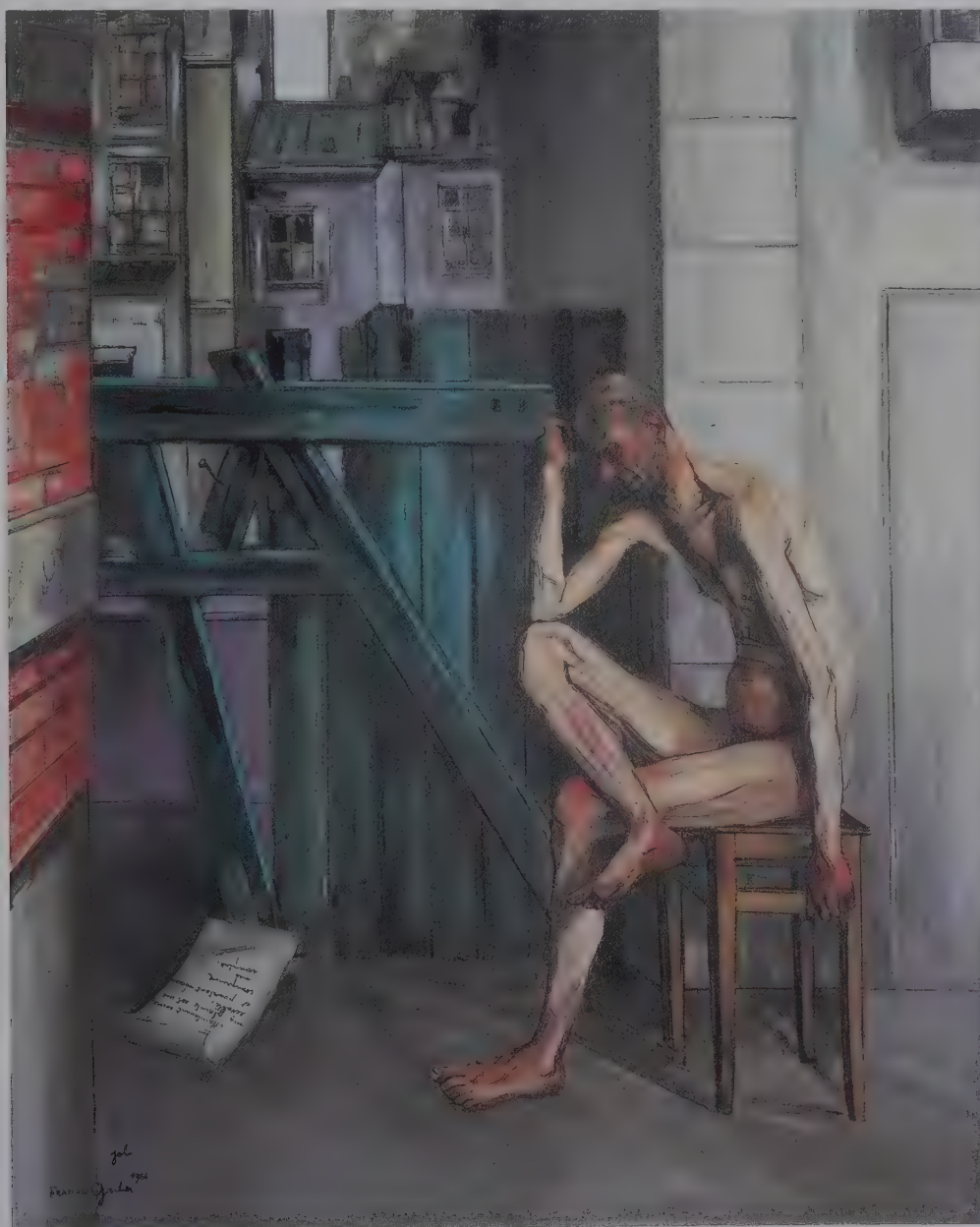
Daring and politically engaged, figurative painting in Paris between 1944 and 1950 was extremely varied. It cannot as a whole be described under the rubric "School of Paris," an entity that existed only in the writings of a few critics and historians who were eager to manifest an unalloyed nationalism. Though it is traditional to call a set of artists working in the same place a "school," the context of the postwar period did not allow this reduction. Apart from the fact that the "School of Paris" and "the French school" were at times critically opposed to each other, the notion of a "second School of Paris,"

successor to the first, which grouped painters from central Europe between 1900 and 1920, scarcely has any meaning today.

One of the constants of Parisian painting of the postwar period is its humanistic and social character, its grasp of reality. Reality, at this point, was dominated by misery and catastrophe, which some artists evoked through literary references. Thus, Masson had recourse to Greek myth in his *Niobé* (1946–47, Musées des Beaux-Arts, Lyon) or to a short story by Franz Kafka with

Le Terrier (1945, Musée Cantini, Marseilles), canvases that evoked pain and loss of identity. In the wake of the occupation, Picasso had returned to the tradition of still lifes with skulls or memento mori. Francis Gruber drew on biblical themes when he painted *Job*, which attracted considerable attention at the first Salon d'Automne held in liberated Paris (FIG. 9.32).

Like Picasso, Gruber turned in 1944 to the Communist Party, to which André Fougeron and Boris Taslitzky also belonged. The latter exhibited his drawings of the



9.32

Francis Gruber
(1912–1948)

Job, 1944

Oil on canvas,
63 ³/₄ x 51 ¹/₈ in.
(162 x 130 cm)

Tate Gallery, London

Buchenwald camp in 1946, and his 1945 canvas *Le Petit Camp de Buchenwald* (Little camp of Buchenwald) (see FIG. 8.140), bought by the state, would be placed in the room devoted to the Resistance at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in 1947. Fougerson developed an austere, hieratic iconography; the women in his 1948 *Parisiennes au marché* (Parisian women at the market; Musée d'Art Moderne, Saint-Etienne) take on the function of high

priestesses of everyday life. The doctrine then called "social realism" or *Nouveau Réalisme*, rather than "socialist realism," was not understood in the same way by Fougerson, Gruber, Léger (who also joined the Communist Party in 1945), Picasso, and Taslitzky. Gruber died in 1948, becoming the "absent father" of a generation that went from the Salon des Moins de Trente Ans (Salon for those under thirty), established during the



9.33

André Masson
(1896–1987)

The Resistance, 1944

Oil on canvas,
69 ¼ x 54 ¾ in.
(176 x 139 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou;
donation Lewis



Occupation, to *Peintres Témoins de Leur Temps* (Painters as witnesses of their times) established in 1951.¹⁹ The realists were united less by a common style than by their choice of contemporary motifs and of exhibition spaces such as the Maison de la Pensée Française in Paris. The public that went there was not seeking esotericism; they were the audience to whom Picasso's *Dove* was addressed. Chosen by Aragon for the poster of the Congrès du Mouvement de la Paix (Peace movement congress) in the spring of 1949 in Paris (FIG. 9.34), it would be reproduced endlessly on plates, lithographs, and scarves.

The dissimilarities that permeated social realism among the French Communist artists and intellectuals betrayed the cultural differences between two generations. Fougerson, Gruber, and Taslitzky were directly affected by the events of the occupation and the Resistance, and they obviously intended to present a painting of testimony and denunciation. Picasso naturally kept

some distance from realism. In 1945 he was absorbed by the genesis of a large canvas which, like *Guernica* (see FIG. 8.29), emanated pain: *The Charnel House* (FIG. 9.35). At the time, only André Masson's great painting *La Résistance* could be compared to it (FIG. 9.33). Nevertheless, in 1946, invited to "decorate" the Château d'Antibes, Picasso painted what would for convenience's sake be called *La Joie de vivre*, a series of still lifes and nudes of a dazzling lightness, an homage to his companion Françoise Gilot and a reply to Matisse. This was a moment of reprieve in a period of chronic war; as Pierre Daix has justly remarked, 1946 was the only year between 1935 and 1964 when France was at peace in the world. Finally, it was the first important manifestation of Picasso's art in the south of France, a region that would soon compete with Paris with the creation of two festivals, at Avignon for theater and at Aix-en-Provence for music. The still lifes with skulls

9.34

Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)

Poster for the First Paris
Congress of the Partisans
of Peace, 1949

Lithograph
Bibliothèque Nationale
de France



9.35
Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)
The Charnel House,
1944–45
Oil and charcoal
on canvas,
78¹¹/₁₆ x 98⁷/₁₆ in.
(199.8 x 250 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York;
Mrs. Sam A. Lewisohn
Bequest (by exchange)
and Mrs. Marya Bernard
Fund in memory of her
husband Dr. Bernard
Bernard and anonymous
funds

that continued to haunt Picasso's work after the war (FIG. 9.36) are sometimes interpreted as a response to the tragic events of the times, sometimes as the expression of the artist's personal suffering after the death of his old friends Robert Desnos and Max Jacob. In 1947, after the sudden death of Nusch Eluard, the wife of Picasso's friend the poet Paul Eluard, came a series of owls on a chair. The personal history of Picasso the individual was expressed in his painting.

Curiously, the work of Fernand Léger, known for his genuine engagement with popular culture, is less easy to interpret. Neither his *Adieu New York* (1946, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou) nor his early 1950s paintings of leisure activities permit one to call him a "history painter," yet he is clearly attempting a synthesis of contemporary concerns with

the great tradition of ambitious large-scale figurative painting that he inherited. His 1948–49 *Les Loisirs, hommage à David* (Leisure—Homage to David; FIG. 9.37) allows us to grasp several aspects of Léger's intentions. The painting is a restatement, at a considerably larger size, of a 1944 painting, *Les Loisirs* (private collection, New York), in which he extends both the theme of popular recreation—in this case cyclists, one of whom is being helped by the gentleman in the red suit after running her bicycle into the tree at left—and the artist's development of a personal iconography drawn from everyday life. Thus the bike in the tree echoes the "crucified" bicycle in the right side of the 1944 *La Grande Julie* (*Big Julie*; The Museum of Modern Art, New York), and the improbably perched acrobat at the far right recalls Léger's longstanding interest in



the circus. To elevate the picture above the status of an abstracted genre scene, Léger here gives his fallen cyclist a paper inscribed “*Hommage à Louis David*,” an explicit reference to David’s great painting *Marat at His Dying Breath* (see FIG. 4.220) (the bicentennial of David’s birth was celebrated at the Orangerie and the Louvre in the summer of 1948). Whether we are to understand Léger’s painting as explicitly political in intent (the “crucifixion” of the working class?) or as a playful parody is not clear, but one is not inclined to burden the painting with much ideological weight. And yet, the monumental *La Grande Parade* of 1954 (final state, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York), by default a definitive statement of the artist, who died suddenly of a heart attack the following year, does not lead toward the idea of a purely decorative art, an art of “happiness” (*bonheur*) such as Matisse promised in his wall compositions of the early 1950s.

As for Matisse, Louis Aragon, member of the Central Committee of the French Communist Party, did not hesitate during the war to praise the artist, who was hardly suspected of Communist leanings but whose wife and

daughter were threatened by the German police. In 1947, in the face of attacks on contemporary art by the public and communists, the writer unfailingly supported the creator of *Jazz*, published that year. He contributed to making Matisse the modern herald of a French tradition at a moment when the Communist press ceaselessly emphasized “rebirth.” Also in 1947, in a preface to a volume of André Fougeron’s drawings, Aragon manifested not so much fervor toward the artist as an anxious concern for the future of an art challenged from across the Atlantic.

The intellectual authority of Aragon, defending Matisse and Fougeron; of Paulhan, who defended Fautrier and Braque; of Tzara and of Eluard, unwavering friends of Picasso and Miró; and of Jean Cassou, who brought gifts to the Musée National d’Art Moderne from the most important of the French artists who had gained recognition before the war, prevented political Manicheism from poisoning Parisian artistic life. The 1947 Bonnard retrospective at the Orangerie was hailed by critics of all stripes. The following year, Picasso threw himself into a pictorial duel with the master of

9.36

Pablo Picasso
(1881–1973)

*Skull, Urchins, and
Lamp on a Table*,
November 27, 1946

Oil on plywood,
31⁷/₈ x 39¹/₆ in.
(81 x 100 cm)

Musée Picasso



9.37

Fernand Léger
(1881–1955)

*Leisure—Homage to
David*, 1948–49

Oil on canvas,
60 3/8 x 72 7/8 in.
(154 x 185 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

realism Gustave Courbet, as well as with the unquestioned master of modernity, Edouard Manet, thus beginning an updated edition of the venerable quarrel between the ancients and the moderns. We would see a sequel to this in the 1980s with the “postmoderns.”

These examples taken from the context of Communist thought, which prevailed after the war, suggest the stunning complexity of the period: in Paris between 1944 and 1952, every possible formal and ideological position jostled for attention. Picasso's work crystallized the ambiguities of the times: derided by the public in a retrospective at the Salon d'Automne of 1944, it officially entered the Musée National d'Art Moderne in 1948. In 1953, after Stalin died, Aragon reproduced a Picasso portrait of Stalin, fifty years younger, on the cover of *Les Lettres françaises*, which would draw the criticism of the French Communist Party.

This episode marked the end of the first phase of political engagement by painters in Paris, engagement in the sense that content was not always distinguishable from a social or political manifesto. One might cite Picasso's *Massacre en Corée* (Korean massacre; 1951,

Musée Picasso) and *La Guerre et la paix* (War and peace; 1952–53, Chapelle de Vallauris), and Edouard Pignon's *L'Ouvrier mort* (Dead worker, second version, 1952; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou) as prime examples of “engaged” painting. It was not until the 1950s that the political and cultural antagonisms engendered by the cold war were explicitly reflected in French painting. Perhaps the most ambitious example in this genre is André Fougeron's 1953 *Atlantic Civilization* (FIG. 9.38), which dominated the Salon d'Automne of 1953. In it the NATO buildings in Paris provide a backdrop for a proto-Pop collage of scary American culture, dominated by a huge Pontiac sedan, which also includes a G.I. reading a porno magazine, a woman grieving over a coffin, and references to the Korean War and the execution of the Rosenbergs.

In this panorama of figurative painting, the work of Jean Hélion is situated elsewhere. A Communist for only two years, from 1932 to 1934, Hélion developed in the United States, starting in 1939, a painting style inspired by the street as a theater of multiple performances, ridiculous and tragic. This is where he began

the “fallen figures” series, a singular iconography that he pursued in Paris after the war. Too personal or too far in advance of his time, he did not obtain the recognition that might have been expected in his Paris years, and several decades would pass before critics and museums discovered his work from 1939 to 1950, which was deeply involved with Paris. The nostalgia he expressed early in this period was transformed into a methodical appropriation of areas of Paris near the studios he occupied from 1946 to 1949: rue Michelet, then avenue de l’Observatoire, facing the gardens whose benches became the auxiliaries of his tireless research on the figure

(standing, seated, upside-down, fallen) and the everyday object—an umbrella, a hat, a newspaper (see FIG. 9.10). An event that took place on an actual site—a motorcyclist at a gas station on boulevard Saint-Michel or a vegetable stand at the market on rue de Buci—would be integrated into a composition of purified rigor, relying on contrasts of motifs. With his “daily scenes,” Héliou attempted to create “a sort of Iliad of the ordinary world,”²⁰ well before writers, sociologists, and artists of the 1960s (Roland Barthes, Jean Baudrillard, Daniel Spoerri) focused on everyday objects and habits.

9.38
André Fougeron
(1913–1998)
Atlantic Civilization,
1953
Oil on canvas,
12 ft. 5 7/8 x 18 ft. 4 in.
(3.8 x 5.59 m)
Tate Modern, London





9.39

Wols (Alfred Otto
Wolfgang Schulze)
(1913–1951)

Yellow Composition,
1947

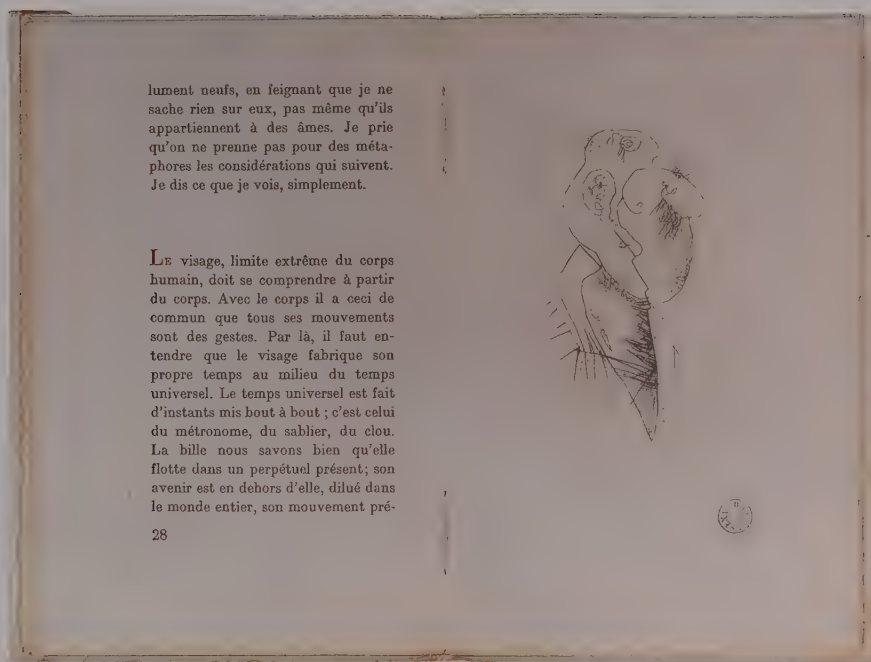
Oil on canvas,
28 3/4 x 36 1/4 in.
(73 x 92 cm)

Staatliche Museen zu
Berlin, Nationalgalerie

Picturing Malaise

Hélion's studio on rue Michelet had been that of the German painter Alfred Wolfgang Schulze, known as Wols; during the war Wols, like Max Ernst, ended up in a French internment camp in the south of France. If Hélion's work caught the viewer in the net of an unsettling but real world, that of Wols might be defined as a painting of absence. The human image is equally out of reach in the work of Henri Michaux, Jean Dubuffet, and Alberto Giacometti (who considered himself a painter as well as a sculptor). If these artists bear witness, it is to an absence or emptiness, a sort of constantly renewed mourning for human identity. A 1945 article by Maurice Merleau-Ponty²¹ presented Paul Cézanne as the master of the incomplete, rather than the pioneer

of cubist construction; as if following in his footsteps, Michaux, Wols, and Giacometti worked in watercolor, gouache, and washes—materials adapted to a disturbed or mutable vision of the sensory world, of others, and of oneself. In 1945 Wols showed at Galerie René Drouin a set of drawings and watercolors, which one might have seen as a species of surrealist automatism. Sartre, however, made him a sort of hero of existential estrangement, of pure otherness, devoted to nonbeing. Wols created four drypoint etchings to illustrate a limited-edition book by Sartre, *Visages* (Faces; FIG. 9.40), published in 1948. Wols's subsequently executed oils, such as *Composition jaune* (Yellow Composition; FIG. 9.39), are formal extensions of the watercolors he had shown in 1945, amplifying the effects of stains, chance, and materials.



9.40

Wols (Alfred Otto
Wolfgang Schulze)
(1913–1951)

Illustration from *Visages*
by Jean-Paul Sartre
(Paris, 1948)

Drypoint etching

In 1948 René Drouin exhibited a series of watercolors by Henri Michaux, among the hundreds that he had recently made after the shock of the loss of his wife. One might again think of a form of surrealist automatism, but Michaux relied on the flux of inner feeling more than on representing the appearance of images of

the unconscious. As with Wols, Michaux's personal poetics was clearly distinct from surrealism (FIG. 9.41), and this series of works was quickly recognized as a visual expression of existential anguish. Michaux, also an acclaimed author whose pre-war writings anticipate in certain respects the postwar work of Sartre and Camus,



9.41

Henri Michaux
(1899–1984)

Untitled, 1949

Watercolor and china
ink on paper,
15½ x 21⅞ in.
(39.3 x 54.8 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

had been awakened to the revelatory possibilities of automatism by the work of Paul Klee, André Masson, and Max Ernst in the 1920s. His own work, looking across the boundary between literature and art, also brings to mind the extraordinary drawings of Victor Hugo, which only gained recognition in the twentieth century.

Artaud, Dubuffet, Giacometti, Michaux, and Wols, all in Paris after the war, had in common an obsessive investigation of the human face. In Giacometti's portraits on canvas or paper, he pared away matter and the figure to the limits of the visible (FIG. 9.46). During his exhibition in 1947 at Galerie Pierre, Artaud showed portraits on paper that followed the 1945 series of works on paper combining drawings and writings he did at Rodez. Artaud explained himself at length on the implication of the draftsman's body in his creation:

The human face
is an empty force, a
field of death. ...
For thousands and thousands of years indeed,
The human face has talked
And breathed
And one is under the impression still
That it has not begun to
Say what it is and what it knows.²²

The uncompromising portraits and self-portraits that he showed at Galerie Pierre in red, gray, and black, sometimes singed with glowing embers, captured the features of some familiar faces in the Parisian literary world, such as Jacques Prevel (FIG. 9.42), the down-and-out poet, suffering from tuberculosis, who befriended Artaud in his last years. Artaud surrounds Prevel's face with a sort of spell or incantation, as if protecting him from evil: "... may Jacques *Marie* Prevel not commit the Sin that his entire face meditates, may the Mary [Marie] within him premeditate against Jacques Prevel."²³

Dubuffet had finally made the transition from wine merchant to artist in 1942, devoting himself from the beginning to a search for methods of expression that rejected received cultural values and techniques. Instead, he looked to children's art and art of the insane (Art Brut) as models of honesty and directness. His public career was launched in 1944 at Galerie René Drouin, and in 1946 he presented works in the series *Mirobolus, Macadam et Cie* (Mirobolus, Macadam and Co.), which included his first paintings in the hautes pâtes (thick

paste) technique he invented in 1945. In 1947 he showed portraits of artists and writers, under the humorous series title *Plus beaux qu'ils croient, beaux malgré eux* (Handsome than they think, handsome in spite of themselves) at Galerie Drouin. The presence of portraits of Marcel Jouhandeau and Paul Léautaud, writers known for their complacency toward the Germans, has suggested to some an indirect protest against the excesses of the purging of intellectuals practiced by the Comité National des Ecrivains (CNE), led by Aragon.²⁴ Dubuffet was said to have joined to appease his friend Jean Paulhan, also a member of CNE. If so, this would be further evidence of the ideological complexity and ambivalence that reigned in postwar cultural Paris. Dubuffet's art, at any rate, takes a somewhat provocative stance in the face of history. Employing irony, caricature, and wordplay, along with some meanness and some emotion, the titles of these portraits apply random attributes to the personages depicted: Henri Michaux is "Monsieur Plume plis au pantalon" (Monsieur Plume with creases in his trousers; FIG. 9.43); this is one representation of the model, amid a veritable theater of marionettes controlled by a puppet master gone mad.

Dubuffet had always wanted to retain control of his own artistic strategy without attaching himself to a movement, even if he agreed to be exhibited with painters selected by the critic Michel Tapié as representative of an "art autre." Moreover, he himself put together a collection of works made by patients in a mental hospital, the origin of his collection of Art Brut, as such work has come to be called. The Foyer de l'Art Brut opened at Galerie Drouin in 1947 with works by Aloïse (Corbaz), Fleury-Joseph Crépin, Adolf Wölfl, and so on, and the Compagnie de l'Art Brut was founded the following year, with André Breton, Jean Paulhan, Michel Tapié, and Charles Ratton, a collector and dealer of African and Oceanic art, as members. The exhibition *De l'art brut préféré aux arts culturels* (Art Brut preferred to cultural arts) was presented in 1949 at Galerie Drouin. Despite strong public interest, neither André Breton nor the French cultural institutions—with the exception of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, directed by François Mathey—provided the necessary support to establish a home for such a collection in Paris. "The magic art" dear to Breton,²⁵ which included "the art of madmen" and tribal art, did not, therefore, have to fear competition



9-43

Jean Dubuffet
(1901-1985)

*Monsieur Plume with
Creases in His Trousers
(Portrait of Henri
Michaux), 1947*

Oil and various
materials on canvas,
51¼ x 38 in.
(130.2 x 96.5 cm)
Tate Gallery, London

from the outsider artists (*marginiaux de l'art*) gathered by Dubuffet. It was in Switzerland, at Lausanne, that the Art Brut collection would find a home for conservation, exhibition, and continuing acquisition.

Not all the works came from asylums; they also came from nonprofessional artists discovered “in the anonymous crowd of common people,” as Dubuffet put it.²⁶ Among them, Gaston Chaissac holds a special place (FIG. 9.44). Supported by Dubuffet, Paulhan, and their friends, he worked in a village in the Vendée. He insisted that his work had no connection with the art of Paris, but in fact the situation is ambiguous. He signed his works of 1948–49 “Chaissac autodidacte” (Chaissac self-taught) or “Chaissac le fumiste”—a word implying that he thought of his work as a bit of a put-on. Yet in his voluminous correspondence with the Parisian cultural milieu, he revealed himself to be skillful at manipulating the codes of the official system, while evading its conformities. His drawings, gouaches, and works incorporating raw materials (*matières brutes*), made from 1938 to 1950 represent more than an episode of Art Brut. Chaissac’s work constitutes an œuvre in itself, gray or colored, caricatural like that of James Ensor, midway between the violence of Artaud and the insolence of Dubuffet. The emphasis on naive arts and techniques, including the art of children, led to what

might be called a new primitivism. Roger Bissière—who settled in a village and only went to Paris for his exhibitions—was inspired by his young son’s first paintings to create a series of works that René Drouin encouraged him to show in 1945. These included *Black Venus*, a work on canvas incorporating painted stucco reliefs that is clearly related to Dubuffet’s emerging techniques (FIG. 9.45).



9.44 (left)
Gaston Chaissac (1910–1964)
Archaic Head, 1947–50
Roots, leather, and beard of corn husks,
9 ⁷/₈ x 7 x 3 ⁷/₈ in. (25 x 18 x 10 cm)
Centre d’Etude et de Documentation
Anatole Jakovsky-Frere-La Sirène,
Blainville-Crevon

9.45 (above)
Roger Bissière (1886–1964)
Black Venus, 1945
Oil on canvas with painted stucco reliefs,
39 ³/₈ x 31 ¹/₂ in. (100 x 81 cm)
Musée National d’Art Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.46

Alberto Giacometti
(1901–1966)

The Artist's Mother,
1950

Oil on canvas,
35 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 24 in.
(89.9 x 61 cm)

The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; acquired
through the Lillie P. Bliss
bequest

Giacometti and Sculpture

The personality of Alberto Giacometti dominated sculpture after the war. Upon his return to Paris in September 1945, after three and a half years in retreat in Geneva, the sculptor returned to his studio on rue Hippolyte-Maindron (FIG. 9.47). A confirmed portraitist since drawing his mother's face in 1937, he was on the path of a radically new way to treat form. Giacometti sought his models among his intimates and in the circle of writers of Saint-Germain-des-Prés. In 1946 he had Simone de Beauvoir, Marie-Laure de Noailles, a great patron of the arts before the war, and Diane Bataille (Georges Bataille's wife) pose for him; before it was cast in bronze, the plaster bust of Diane was exhibited in 1947 at the first large postwar national exhibition of contemporary painting and sculpture, organized by Yvonne Zervos in Avignon. Giacometti's art elicited many commentaries that above all emphasized the evanescence of the figure. In fact, his portraits and extremely thin busts possessed an extraordinarily strong, very material expressiveness, due to his approach to modeling of volume, in which the worked surface seemed to sculpt the ambient space, instead of simply being defined by that space.

Giacometti's standing figures have sometimes been reproached for what André Breton called miserabilism, "the depreciation of reality in place of its exaltation," because of their thinness and the blank stare of these figures, but also because some of them appear to express suffering or the impact of having witnessed atrocity. *The Hand* (painted plaster, 1947; Alberto Giacometti-Stiftung, Zurich) and a project that paid homage to French victims of the war, *La Nuit* (1947), evoke terrible moments. Starting in 1946, the sculptor focused on the theme of space, having received commissions for commemorative monuments (which were not realized). While we have been tempted to see his works only as formal experiments, certain works are linked with history. For example, the project for a monument to Gabriel Péri, a communist shot by Germans in 1941, made for a competition sponsored by the newspaper *L'Humanité* in 1946, is a clear case of Giacometti's style dovetailing with humanistic content. This project marks the first appearance of the "walking man," a counterpart to the "standing woman," which would

appear beginning in 1946: it was sketched for a commemorative monument replacing the statue of Jean Macé destroyed by the Germans. Both figures would become signature motifs for the artist.

On a formal level, the major question Giacometti asked himself was that of line. The figures for which he would become known found their definitive form after his return to Paris, but the ten preceding years saw the birth of essential elements. The question of point of view complements that of line. His figures fall into two types: very small figures on very large pedestals,

9.47

Denis Colomb
(b. 1902)

Alberto Giacometti
in his studio, 1954



like the bronze *Four Figures on a Base* (1950; Kunsthau, Zurich), which might be compared to candles on an altar, and the almost life-size figures of the “walking man” and “standing woman.” Sometimes a single pedestal supports busts and figures on foot, as in *Place, Composition with Three Figures and a Head* (FIG. 9.48), an ensemble of figures of various dimensions occupying a space without perspective, which might seem like a surreal attempt to represent “impossible” vision. The sculptor might also have wanted to bring together in an arbitrary space two of the traditional genres of commemorative sculpture, the bust and the standing figure. In a purely formal way, the principle of such an association flows from the cubist experiment of combining different points of view. The extremely strong visual impact of these ensembles has to do with their consistently frontal presentation, even though the viewer is able to walk around the figures, thus tracing a multitude of lines in space.

Giacometti's work was all the more important in post-war Paris in that it bore the mark of questions debated

in a philosophical context, recalling Albert Camus's philosophy of the absurd. But to interpret these figures from 1945 to 1955 solely from the viewpoint of a tragic humanism is to privilege a purely emotional signification; the problems they respond to concern the phenomena of vision, just as the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty concerned perception. The residue of sensation—what Cézanne called “*petites sensations*,” to which Giacometti referred—led him to the sparest possible transposition of what he saw or what he preserved in memory.

Photographed in these years by Brassai, Cartier-Bresson, Emile Savitry, Ernest Scheidegger, Marc Vaux, and others, Giacometti became as famous as his work. This fascination with the physical persona of the artist went beyond Giacometti, as a new era was begun in the history of the relationship between artists and the public. Photographs of contemporary artists and intellectuals—Calder, Camus, Genet, Léger, Matisse, Picasso, Sartre—were pervasive, contributing to the creation of “heroic” lives founded on a few anecdotes. Picasso's



9.48

Alberto Giacometti
(1901–1966)

*Place, Composition
with Three Figures
and a Head*, 1950

Painted bronze,
22 ⁷/₈ x 22 ³/₈ x 16 ¹/₂ in.
(58 x 57 x 42 cm)
Städtische Kunsthalle,
Mannheim, Germany

example is well known. Moreover, Picasso and Masson were the first painters in the 1950s to be filmed in France, the former by Henri-Georges Clouzot, the latter by Jean Grémillon. Before them, Henri Goetz and Christine Boumeester, two abstract painters, were filmed in their studios by Alain Resnais in 1947, but in very short, intimate, and somewhat unresolved films. But the case of Giacometti is striking because of the unusual extent to which he and his work lent themselves to photography. Scheidegger pictured the painter facing his model; Cartier-Bresson captured the everyday man crossing the rue d'Alésia, his raincoat over his head; and Marc Vaux and Brassai immortalized the drawings, paintings, and plaster sculpture that accumulated in the sculptor's studio. A legendary image of the studio emerged after the war, with its graffiti walls and its dark corners from which the long limbs of a headless *homme qui marche* sprang forth. A text by Jean Genet reinforced the public's curiosity regarding a magical place that saw the birth of a parallel reality, at once fragile and sublime.²⁷

It is difficult to determine the Swiss sculptor's precise influence on other artists. But an undeniable affinity links his work to that of his former fellow student in the atelier of Bourdelle, Germaine Richier. Richier shocked some clergy members and French Catholics by making a *Christ* (1950) reduced to an emaciated stick for the church of Assy in Haute Savoie. With her anguished figures such as *The Shepherd of Landes* (1951; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek, Denmark) and her feminine metaphors like *The Forest* (FIG. 9.49), she might be considered as the progenitor of a line of sculptors, active essentially in France and England, who favored emotional, indeed grotesque, expression. Richier followed a painstaking method that involved squaring up the model or maquette to translate proportions and mass to the full-scale work. It was as though she were stretching a skin, in contrast to Giacometti, who sought the line. Jean-Robert Ipousteguy, César (at least until *The Man of Saint-Denis* [1965; The Tate Gallery, London]), Lynn Chadwick, and Kenneth Armitage are among those affected by the work of Richier, who announced the return of an expressionistic sculpture.



9.49
 Germaine Richier
 (1902–1959)
The Forest, 1945–47
 Bronze, height:
 50¾ in. (129 cm)
 Fondation Marguerite
 et Aimé Maeght,
 Saint-Paul de Vence



THE TRIUMPH OF ABSTRACTION IN THE 1950S

We returned . . . to the fundamental options . . .
we became attentive to the basics, to the primary
factors of all art.

ANDRÉ CHASTEL

Abstraction represented one of the great adventures in the art of Paris in the 1950s, a period when galleries took on a new importance. Many of the postwar galleries were new (Galleries Facchetti, Craven, and Arnaud), and many were directed by women. They included Jeanne Bucher, who died in November 1946, after returning from a long stay in New York, where she planned exhibitions of American painters at her gallery, Lydia Conti, Nina Dausset, and Denise René (the champion of kinetic art). René Drouin had begun his activity during the occupation and vigorously promoted the new “informal” art after the war. Starting in 1943, Galerie de France had shown realists like André Fougeron and abstractionists like Estève, Tal Coat, and others.⁹ Returning from Cuba, where he had been in exile during the war, Pierre Loeb reestablished Galerie Pierre.

From the smallest, L'Esquisse, to the most spacious, that of Aimé Maeght, which opened at the end of 1945 with a Matisse exhibition, the galleries showed a spirit

of adventure and a commitment to new art, which was supported by enthusiastic art critics such as Charles Estienne, Léon Degand, and the three Michels: Tapié, Ragon, and Seuphor. As for Maeght, he created his own review, *Derrière le miroir*, and would also contribute to the development of the print market by systematically publishing artists' lithographs, like Pierre Tal-Coat's 1972 cover for *Derrière le miroir* (FIG. 9.51). Writers were writing about artists more and more: could we imagine Fautrier without Paulhan? Bram Van Velde without Samuel Beckett? Dubuffet without . . .

Dubuffet? Numerous artists also picked up a pen: Jean-Michel Atlan was a poet in the early days, and Camille Bryen, Dubuffet, and Michaux had dual careers. Masson was sought after by journals, and Jean Bazaine in 1948 published his influential *Notes sur la peinture d'aujourd'hui* (Notes on painting today).

If the capital was distinguished by its writers, it was also unusual for the abundance of foreign artists who

9.50 (opposite)
Georges Braque
(1882–1963)
Atelier IX, 1952–56
Oil on canvas,
57½ x 57½ in.
(146 x 146 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
George Pompidou



9.51
Pierre Tal-Coat
(Pierre-Louis Jacob)
(1905–1985)
Cover of *Derrière Le
Miroir* (issue 199, Paris:
Editions Maeght, 1972)



9.52
Sam Francis
(1923–1994)
Other White, 1952
Oil on canvas,
80 7/8 x 75 in.
(205.5 x 190.5 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

resided there. Those who had moved to Paris prior to World War II saw their reputations affirmed and their work blossom after the Liberation. Serge Poliakoff was the oldest abstract painter established in Paris to be recognized in the postwar period: he had been there since 1923. Also from Russia, Nicolas de Staël came to Paris in 1938; the brothers Geer and Bram Van Velde had arrived from the Netherlands in the early 1920s, the Portuguese Maria Elena Vieira da Silva in 1928. Wols, who had studied in Dresden, came to Paris in 1932; and in 1935 the German Hans Hartung moved to the French capital. Certain of them (Vieira da Silva and Arpad Szenes) experienced exile during World War II, others lived clandestinely (Alberto Magnelli), and still others were interned in France (Wols). Of those who arrived after the end of the war, several

would play a large role in Parisian abstraction: Zao Wou-ki, born in Beijing, who settled in Paris in 1948; Hantaï, who arrived from Hungary in 1949; and his compatriot, Marta Pan, the sculptor, who had come two years earlier.

The Americans are a special case. After the war, a new generation discovered the French capital. "It is surprising and interesting to observe the reactions and behavior of American writers or artists in Paris; they love the city, and they're troubled by it," Simone de Beauvoir noted.²⁸ Some GIs whose studies had been interrupted by the war resumed them with the support of grants. Others came for the first time, like Sam Francis, who was twenty-seven when he arrived in Paris in 1950. The city's light, "a beautiful, celestial gray,"²⁹ impressed him: his first French works, such as the

1952 *Other White* (FIG. 9.52), are of a nebulous white that is a sharp departure from the lively color of his California paintings. The critics Pierre Schneider and Georges Duthuit had no problem enrolling him in *art informel*, the term coined by Michel Tapié in 1952 as a comprehensive description for the broad range of postwar abstraction that featured an engagement with materials and a calligraphic or lyrical approach opposed to “hard-edge” abstraction.

In 1948 Ellsworth Kelly, who had experienced the war in France in 1944–45, returned to Paris, where he at first continued to make figurative work. However, he began exploring the surrealist technique of automatic drawing and the chance techniques pioneered by Merce Cunningham and John Cage, whom he met at his Paris hotel. He also encountered European artists including Michel Seuphor, Brancusi, Joan Miró, and George Vantongerloo, and saw the abstractions of Sophie Taeuber-Arp. In 1949 he began his abstract work with *Window, Museum of Modern Art, Paris* (private collection), which, he said, marked the end of painting “such as [he] had practiced it.”³⁰ Kelly, who throughout his career has derived his forms from observed reality, became entranced by Parisian architecture and especially the play of light on its surfaces. The 1951 *Cité* (FIG. 9.53) strikingly illustrates this aspect of his work. In 1950 his submission of *Relief with Blue* and *Antibes* (both in private collections) to the Salon des Réalités Nouvelles, revived in 1946 to reassemble “non-objective,” “non figurative,” and “concrete” art, but in fact open to all kind of abstract painting, was not enough to convince the dealer Denise René, who exclusively showed geometric works, to take him on. In 1954, after showing at Jean-Robert Arnaud’s small gallery, he went back to New York, bringing along his photographs of Parisian streets and walls.

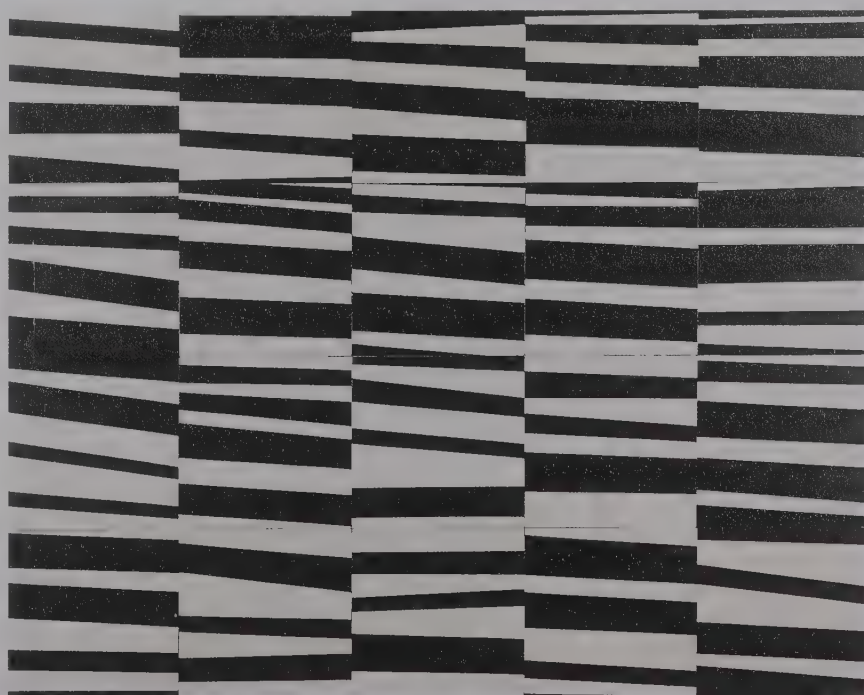
From a critical point of view, the two examples here represent polar opposites: lyrical abstraction on the one hand, and geometric abstraction on the other, but criticism was not content with such simple polarities. Opposing one movement with feverish passion, critics would create new categories: abstract impressionism or “abstract landscape” (*paysagisme abstrait*), Tachism, “cold,” “hot,” or “informal” abstraction, and so on. The notion of the informal, in particular, lent itself to misunderstanding, for it suggested more than abstraction.

In 1945 Fautrier (close to the group of resistance fighters surrounding Eluard and Paulhan during the war) exhibited the *Otages* (Hostages) series at Galerie Drouin. These were heavily impastoed panel paintings, begun at a clinic on the edge of Paris where he took refuge after a run-in with the Gestapo (FIG. 9.54). The dense woods surrounding the clinic were used by the Germans for the torture and summary execution of prisoners. The *Hostages* panels each evoke the remains of a human face, with the impasto suggesting crushed bone and skin. In the catalog for the 1945 exhibition, André Malraux underscored the evolution of the imagery toward forms without a direct relationship to the tragic subject, as Fautrier evolved “a hieroglyphics of suffering”:

Little by little, Fautrier suppresses the direct suggestion of blood, the complicity of the corpse. Colors free from any rational link with torture are substituted for the initial ones, even as a contour replaces the ravaged profiles, trying to express the drama without representing it.³¹

The following year, the poet Francis Ponge was the first to evoke Georges Bataille’s notion of the *inform* using the *Hostages* as an example.³² For the critic Michel Tapié, Fautrier’s work marked the beginning

9.53
Ellsworth Kelly (b. 1923)
Cité, 1951
Oil on wood, twenty
joined panels,
56 ¼ x 70 ½ in.
(142.9 x 179.1 cm)
San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art



of an *art autre*, an “other art.” This phrase allowed the gathering of Jean Arp, Camille Bryen, Hans Hartung, Georges Mathieu, Francis Picabia, Raoul Ubac, and Wols in the exhibition *Noir et blanc* in 1948, while the exhibition *Signifiants de l’informel* in 1951 united Dubuffet, Fautrier, Mathieu (FIG. 9.55), Michaux, Jean-Paul Riopelle, Iaroslav Serpan, and Wols. *Art informel* and *art autre*, two expressions coined by Michel Tapié, would define the new painting in Paris. Moreover, many critics in 1946, like André Chastel, described these paintings that disdained ruler and compass as “lyrical.” Several discourses were woven around the works, accentuating their pure *sensibilité* and gradually uncoupling the painters’ links either to recent history or to existentialism, with which they had been associated after the war. When young painters expressed frustration with the limitations imposed by the Salon de Mai in 1952, the critic Charles Estienne inaugurated the Salon d’Octobre to oppose the tendency toward a dogmatic acceptance of geometric abstraction. In 1953 he attempted a rapprochement with André Breton via the gallery L’Etoile Scellée. The surrealists hesitated, for the entire narrative aspect of surrealism was at stake. As for the abstract painters Simon Hantaï and Judit Reigl, they officially broke with surrealism in 1956, after three years of being in the guild, in an

attempt to escape the restraint of formalism. To distinguish itself within this panorama of tendencies, Galerie Charpentier began in 1954 an annual exhibition program of abstraction under the “School of Paris” banner. It was Jean-Michel Atlan, rather “lyrically abstract” himself, who would create the poster for the gallery’s exhibition in 1955.

At stake in the promotion of a new School of Paris was the city’s—and the nation’s—cultural reputation. Paris was no longer a privileged place in the international art market, as energetic gallery scenes had emerged in New York and San Francisco. The artistic relations between France and the United States were tense. While the work of artists of the so-called New York School—Willem de Kooning, Adolph Gottlieb, L. K. Morris, Jackson Pollock—was scarcely shown in Paris, a few French artists—Bryen, Olivier Debré, Dubuffet, Pierre Soulages, and Vieira da Silva—had some success in the United States, thanks to museums, patrons, or galleries. But the disjunction between the two centers of abstract art, Paris and the United States, was aggravated by excessively chauvinistic criticism on both sides.

Abstraction enjoyed its brief moment of triumph in the 1950s, a time when Braque and Jacques Villon were painting the most accomplished canvases of their



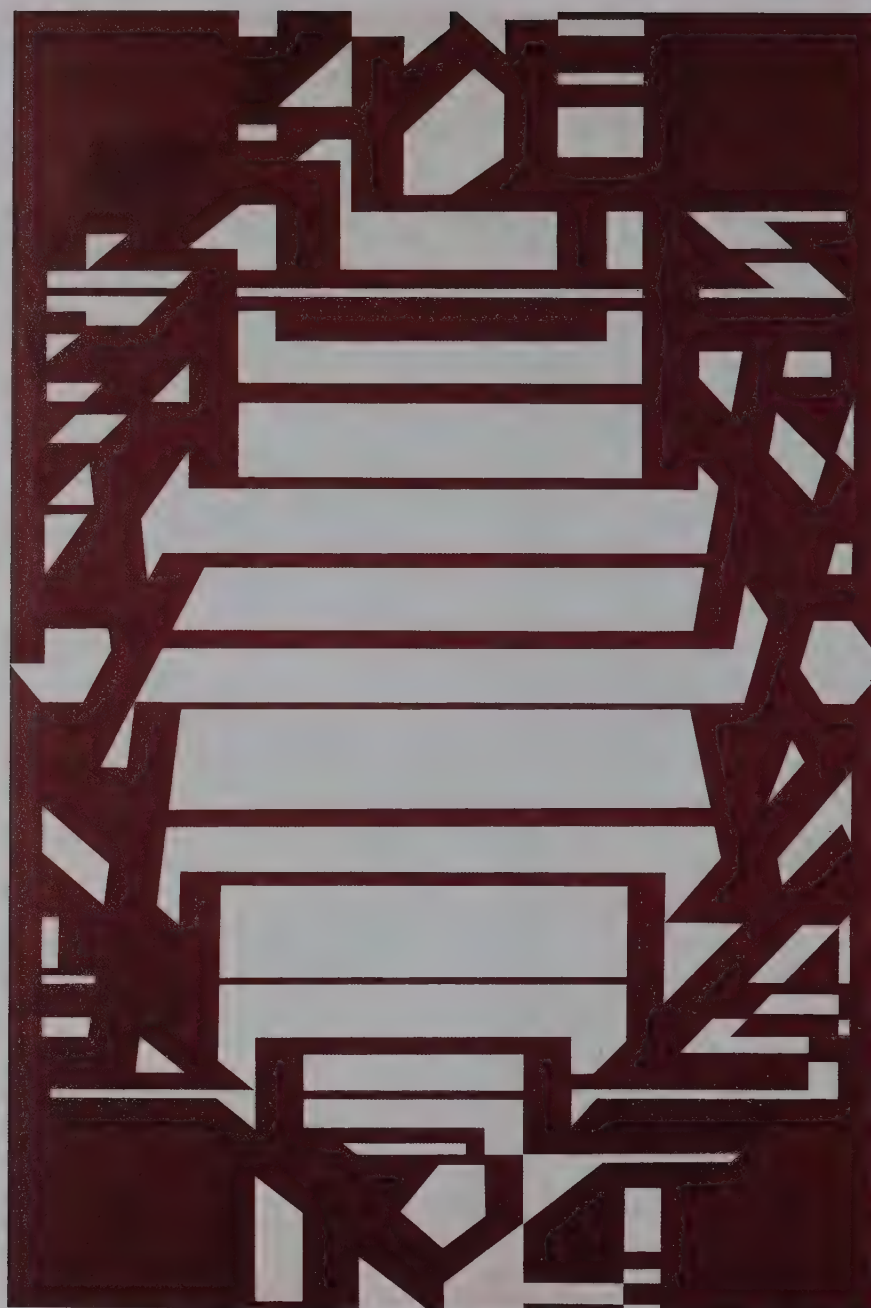
9.54
Jean Fautrier
(1898–1964)
The Jewess, 1943
Oil on paper, pasted
on canvas,
28 3/4 x 61 3/16 in.
(73 x 155.5 cm)
Musée d’Art Moderne
de la Ville de Paris



careers—the Atelier series for the former (FIG. 9.50), and the Villacoublay series for the latter. Parisian abstraction would have great difficulty keeping itself at the forefront of the art scene in the coming years, however. A telling symptom of the official state of mind, which lasted about twenty years, was that the first large retrospective exhibition devoted to Nicolas de Staël, seen as a beacon of Parisian abstraction of the immediate postwar period, would not happen until 1981 at the museum of Modern Art. De Staël had died in 1955.

The infatuation with kinetic art, a bomb flung by Denise René in 1955, began at this time. Geometric abstraction had begun to have a new presence in the mid-1950s, centered on her gallery, which had opened with the first exhibition of Victor Vasarely in 1944. In 1955 Vasarely published his *Yellow Manifesto*, which, recognizing the transformation of art by mechanical reproduction, calls for a new, non-elite, broadly accessible art of “multiples.” On April 6, 1955, the gallery presented the exhibition *Mouvement*, bringing together

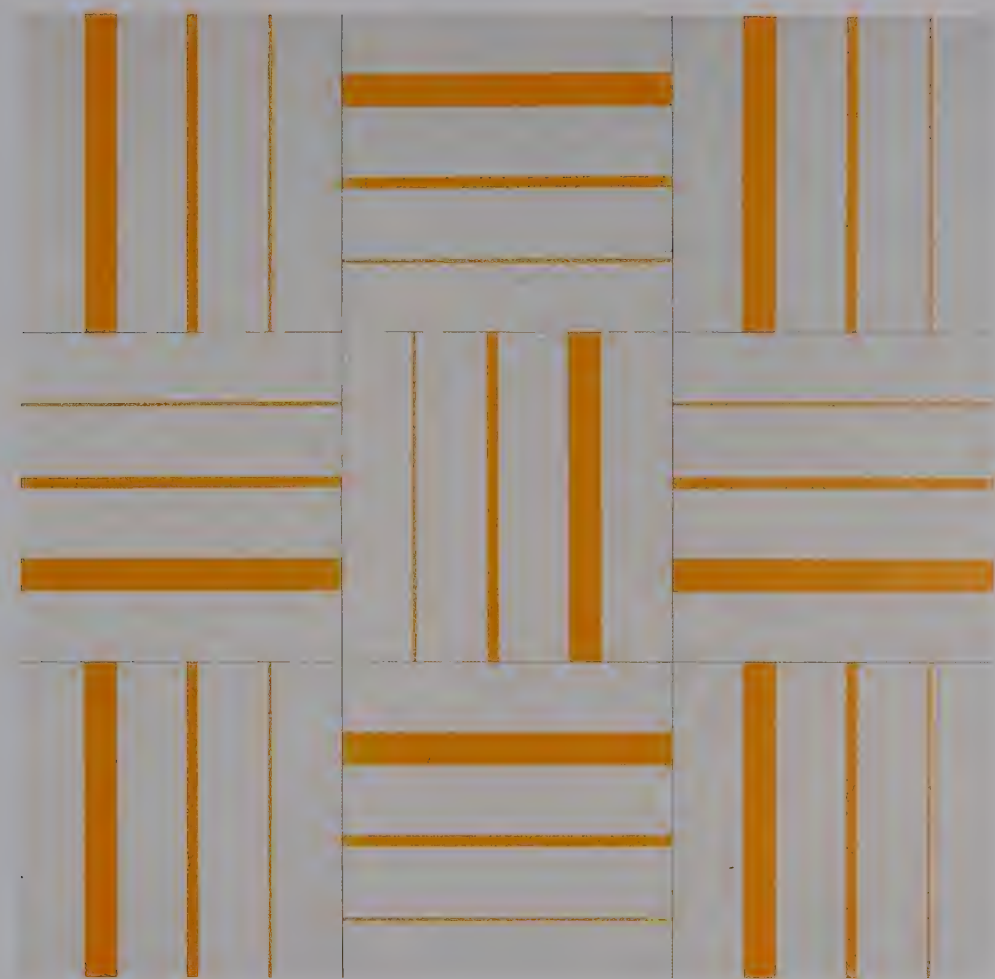
9.55
Georges Mathieu
(b. 1921)
Faintness, 1951
Oil on canvas,
51 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. x 62 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(130 x 159 cm)
The Art Institute of
Chicago; gift of
Mr. and Mrs. Maurice
E. Culberg



9.56
Victor Vasarely
(1908–1997)
Mindoro II, 1954–58
Oil on canvas,
76 3/4 x 51 1/8 in.
(195 x 130 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

Vasarely, Yaacov Agam, Pol Bury, Alexander Calder, Duchamp, Robert Jacobsen, Jésus Rafael Soto, and Jean Tinguely, and introducing the idea of “transformable works” such as Vasarely’s *Mindoro II* (FIG. 9.56). A publication accompanying the exhibition, with texts by Pontus Hultén and Roger Bordier, explains the concept of these works: “Be it through the motion of the work itself, through optical movement, or through intervention by the viewer, the work can—by dint of its

substance and in its very nature—be constantly and perhaps infinitely re-created.”³³ Praised by some as a link to new technologies, kinetic and optical art needed to be seen in larger exhibition spaces or outdoors. For some artists kinetic art was related to earlier movements; in a body of work dating from the early 1950s, François Morellèt, responding both to Constructivism and to his own fascination with the geometric mosaics of the Alhambra, foreshadowed the concerns of kinetic



art (FIG. 9.57). But for Agam, the true challenge for kinetic art was to transcend the boundaries of traditional aesthetics (painting as a window), and to go beyond two or even three dimensions. For him kinetic art concerned not only space and movement but temporal dimensions of present and future. This powerful idea marks the difference between optical and kinetic art, although Denise René and Vasarely did not try to clarify the confusion.

Constructed Abstraction

Maria Helena Vieira da Silva's work is an important example of the *abstraction construite* ("constructed abstraction") of the 1950s. Her training was solid: she was taught by Antoine Bourdelle at the Académie de

la Grande-Chaumière, Fernand Léger at his Académie de l'Art Contemporain, and Roger Bissière at the Académie Ranson. Upon her 1947 return to Paris from wartime exile in Brazil, Vieira da Silva showed her work without getting particularly involved in the controversies surrounding various modes of abstraction. Evoking existing sites or a "mental image" attached to a place, Vieira gave her paintings objective titles, for example *La Gare Saint-Lazare* (1949; Galerie Jeanne Bucher, Paris) and *Jardins suspendus* (Hanging gardens; 1955, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou), but she was interested in exploring the possibilities for abstraction suggested by the spaces or structures she depicts. For instance, in *The Library*, the rectangle that outlines a cabinet or a book becomes an element in the basic pictorial structure; in the foreground, tile shapes metamorphose into several sorts of checkerboards

9.57
François Morellet
(b. 1926)
Untitled, 1954
Oil on three assembled
wood panels,
52⁷/₈ x 52³/₄ in.
(134.3 x 134 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.58

Maria Helena Vieira
da Silva (1908–1977)

The Library, 1949

Oil on canvas,
45 x 58 in.
(114.5 x 147.5 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

(FIG. 9.58). Curved spaces adjoin vanishing perspectives, accentuated by black lines that provide fragile but indispensable scaffoldings.

A hint of color was an essential element in painting for Nicolas de Staël. Adept at India ink drawing, he nevertheless constructed his paintings very differently from Vieira da Silva, spreading thick layers with a palette knife or trowel. The lower layers remain visible around each definitive unit: in *The Roofs*, the gray, ocher, or black squares and rectangles each appear on a ground that extends beyond them, forming particularly attractive centers of color (FIG. 9.59). Occupied by the question of the picture plane and the nonperspectival, de Staël is fundamentally an urban painter. His favorite reference is to contemporary music, from jazz to the Second Viennese School to works by Olivier Messiaen and Pierre Boulez, who made the artist a gift of his

first book of *Structures* in 1952. *Souvenir de Sydney Bechet* (1953, Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou), punctuated by vertical planes of vivid color, evokes the abstractions of Kupka, who also sought to link painting and music.

Staël's technique is not unrelated to certain large paintings by Soulages of the late 1950s. In these works, wide black bars reveal at their edges the grounds illuminating them, thus reversing the traditional relationship between object and shadow (*April 14, 1956*, FIG. 9.61). Serge Poliakoff seemed to work on a single type of structure, with no major transformations to his system between 1945 and 1969. Less concerned than de Staël with layering of color, he was similarly involved with the problems of the picture plane and the wall surface, which he resolved with structures built from clearly defined zones of color, not flat but vibrating with



9.59

Nicolas de Staël
(1914–1955)

The Roofs, 1952

Oil on hardboard,
78¾ x 59 in.

(200 x 150 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre

Georges Pompidou; gift
of the artist



9.60
Pierre Soulages
(b. 1919)
Painting 1948–I, 1948
Walnut stain on paper,
height: 50 3/4 in.
(129 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

nuances and a sense of the materials (FIG. 9.62). Often left untitled, his paintings are differentiated in museums by indications of color.

Maurice Estève's reputation, more than that of Alfred Manessier, Jean Le Moal, or Jean Bazaine, would suffer from the postwar militance of certain galleries and critics in favor of painters in the "French tradition." This expression conveyed a valiant sense of struggle in 1941, when Bazaine organized the first modern art exhibition in occupied Paris without German authorization, *Vingt jeunes peintres de tradition française* (Twenty young painters in the French tradition) at the galerie Braun. Although Estève was not represented there, his paintings were shown in 1943 at the galerie de France, which undertook a similar enterprise under the phrase "today's painters." The notion of "French tradition" became more and more tainted by conformism during the 1950s, however, allowing bad figurative painters and mediocre followers of geometric abstraction in the "School of

Paris" to be indiscriminately thrown together. Estève had been among those who represented the "rebirth" of French art at the end of the war: in 1946, Pierre Francastel published a hymn to the artistic glory of Paris in *Nouveau Dessin, nouvelle peinture, l'école de Paris*, where he firmly situated Estève's work. Estève's paintings jangled with their lively, acid colors; less clearly constructed than those of Poliakoff or Nicolas de Staël, they bore descriptive titles, like the 1951 *Paris à deux mille ans* (Two-thousand-year-old Paris; FIG. 9.63), which convey a certain optimism, if not any particular narrative significance. Bazaine, Manessier, and Estève benefited from commissions for murals in connection with the renewal of sacred art in the provinces, using a variety of techniques besides painting (mosaics, stained glass, tapestry), but one can recognize in all these works formal features proper to painting. Such abstraction "in the French tradition" would lead to no innovations in the applied arts, except in the case



of Bissière, who would contribute to the metamorphosis of tapestry by incorporating textiles, leather, and pieces of fabric in surprising abstract panels.

"Writing" (*écriture*) as a prominent aspect of artistic practice, began to emerge in 1949 when Galeries Colette Allendy and Deux-Îles exhibited abstract works by Hans Hartung. These had been made before the war but had been ignored up to that point by his generation, as had the work of Wols and Gérard Schneider. Nevertheless, younger artists were drawn to them. They included Soulages, Mathieu, and Raymond Hains, who soon fell in love with the painting known as "lyrical" or *informel*. Along with Michaux, Hartung was the first in France, in the interwar period, to conceive of a work with no content other than traces of ink on paper or large brushstrokes on canvas. After the War, he did a series of works where black spirals and knots covered planes of color, made with scrupulous care on grounds prepared by assistants; the impression of gestural energy

is no less strong for that. His untitled paintings elude subjectivity or reference to the real, in favor of the notions of series, system, or inventory. Whereas Schneider titled his nongeometric abstract canvases with the word "opus" and a number, e.g., *Opus 65-B, 2-1954* (Paris, Laurence Schneider collection), as was done in music, Hartung used the letter "T" followed by the year and a number (*T. 1956-14*, FIG. 9.64), and Soulages opted for the complete date. Much has been said about writing and the sign in relation to such works, following Jean Paulhan: "The old painters began with meaning and found signs for it. But the new ones begin with signs and then simply find meanings for them."³³ This was to neglect the part played by construction in the painting, as one sees in Hartung's work and as Soulages's declarations on the geometry of his "*architectures*" demonstrate.

The investigation of materials was not neglected either. The first pieces by Soulages using walnut stain became historic works (FIG. 9.60), better known than

9.61

Pierre Soulages
(b. 1919)

April 14, 1956, 1956

Oil on canvas,
75 3/4 x 143 1/16 in.
(195 x 365 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.62

Serge Poliakoff
(1900–1969)

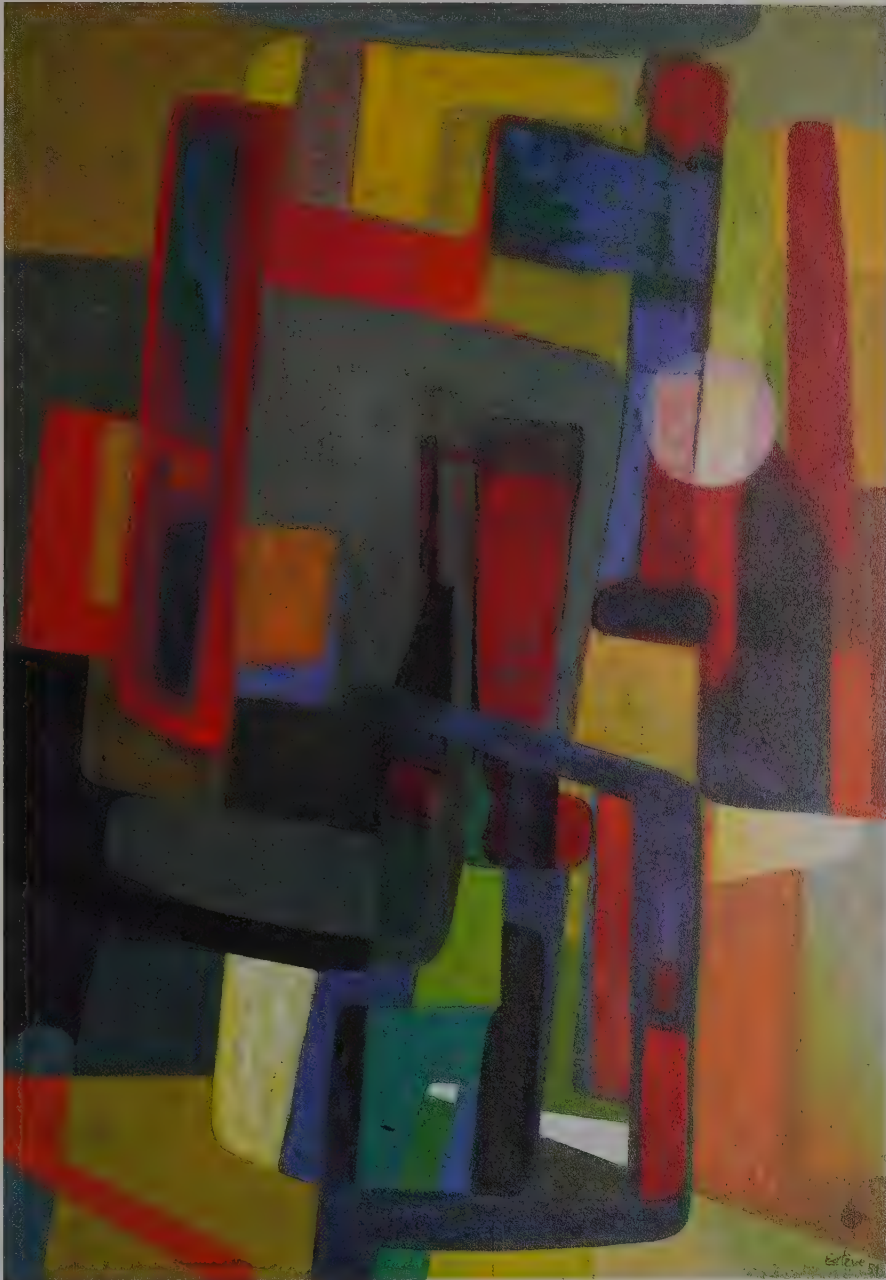
*Untitled [Yellow and
Black], 1952*

Oil on canvas,
51 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 35 in.
(130.3 x 89 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

his black tar on glass works of the same period. The use of black in painting (related to the use of India ink on paper) was a dominant feature in the Parisian work of Soulages, Michaux, Schneider, and Mathieu, and in Debré's large drawings: pure black, seen as equal to a color, or an infinitely nuanced black. This feature is characteristic of a sign-based painting, and the works' resonance with Chinese and Japanese brush and ink painting became all the more noticeable since most of

the artists involved expressed interest in the aesthetics of the Far East. Paris was one of the cities in the West where philosophies permeated with Chinese Taoism and Japanese Zen received an enthusiastic reception after World War II. Wols and Masson studied Chinese aesthetics, while Mathieu and Degottex made references to Japanese calligraphy. In the 1950s such techniques provided a direct inspiration for some of André Masson's abstract and figurative works. For his own part, Masson



had practiced automatic drawing in India ink beginning in 1923 and had used sand on canvas in 1926 and 1927; during his staying in the United States during the war, he created some great “black paintings” with mixed media. In the 1950s he returned to a systematic exploration of these materials, arriving at an exceptional mastery of mixed techniques (FIG. 9.66), while his semi-abstract painting of the 1950s relied on brilliant gesture, founded on a bodily rhythm similar to dance.

Camille Bryen’s work had a “scratched” manner that evoked Wols, a spray of lines producing effects both wild and refined. *Precambrian* (FIG. 9.67) bears Bryen’s personal touch, the play on words referring to a period preceding history—the history of painting. This work marks a transition from the subdued color and dense structures of his *informel* paintings of around 1950 and the brighter hues and linear scaffolding that distinguish his paintings beginning in the mid-1950s.

9.63
Maurice Estève
(1904–2001)
*Two-thousand-year-old
Paris (Paris à deux
mille ans)*, 1951
Oil on canvas,
45 1/8 x 31 7/8 in.
(116 x 81 cm)
Musée Estève, Bourges



9.64
Hans Hartung
(1904–1989)
T. 1956–14, 1956
Oil on canvas,
70 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 53 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.
(180 x 136 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou; gift
of the Galerie de France

If Soulages's signs bring to mind imaginary ideograms of monumental character, as do Olivier Debré's sober drawings in India ink called *Signes-Personnages* (*Signs-figures*, 1951–52), those of Jean Degottex, all purity and finesse, are closer to the Chinese writing known as "*fei bai*," literally "flying white," poised to vanish in the wind or silence (FIG. 9.65). André Breton had co-written the catalogue for Degottex's 1955 show at Galerie l'Etoile Scellée, pointing out the artist's affinity with Zen philosophy and Oriental calligraphy.

This encouraged the artist in his study of the history of Eastern art and thought, which led to his focus on the gestural aspect of his paintings and his attempt to capture in them the "void" that Eastern philosophies address.

Another pictorial trend was stimulated by the display of visual and tactile materials in the urban street. In 1949 two Bretons, Raymond Hains and Jacques de la Villeglé, became attracted to the tattered posters they would see as they walked the city making a film about the subject of outdoor advertisement posting. Hains,



as a photographer, and Villeglé as a young architect interested in recycling urban waste, began peeling the top layers of the posters to reveal fragments of the underlying paper. They then started collaborating on works with the torn paper, such as the 1949 *Ach Alma Manetro* (Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou). These *affichistes*, as such artists came to be called, regarded these poster fragments as expressing modern society's "collective unconscious," and their process as a way of reclaiming the detritus of a commercial culture as art (FIGS. 9.68 and 9.69). The *affichistes* did not show their work until 1957 and were unaware of the similar work by the Italian Mimmo Rotella, who had exhibited his torn poster pieces in 1954. But by the time they all showed at the first Biennale de Paris, in 1959, *affichisme* had taken on the dimensions of an international movement, with artists including François Dufrêne and Asger Jorn contributing impressive work.

Hains, Villeglé, and Rotella eliminated the posters' function, using them as raw material for their art after shredding them; part of the message remained but was distorted: the information relayed by the posters became enigmatic. Among these three artists, Jacques

de la Villeglé is probably the one who achieves the highest pictorial quality with this technique. Conversely, Yves Klein's transformation of found objects, discussed below, subordinated them to the paint covering them and the rest of the canvas. By the disintegration of forms, the interplay of materials and invented writing, and finally by salvaging and transforming objects in order to suppress the effect of the real, these artists created a new "imaginary space," to use Bryen's description of Klein's events, and, until the 1960s, gave non-geometric abstraction in Paris a rarely equaled originality and force.

Abstract Sculpture: The Beauty and Color of Materials

While abstract sculpture was less visible than painting in Parisian galleries in the 1950s, it was no less dynamic. Geometric abstraction—which took root in Paris before the war with the groups Cercle et Carré and Abstraction-Création—blossomed into neo-constructivist sculpture, promoted by Galerie Denise René. After the incomprehension from which abstract sculpture in France had suffered between the two

9.65

Jean Degottex
(1918–1988)

Aware II, 28.3.1961,
1961

Oil on canvas,
79½ x 137¼ in.
(202 x 350 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.66

André Masson
(1896–1987)

The Blood of Birds, 1956

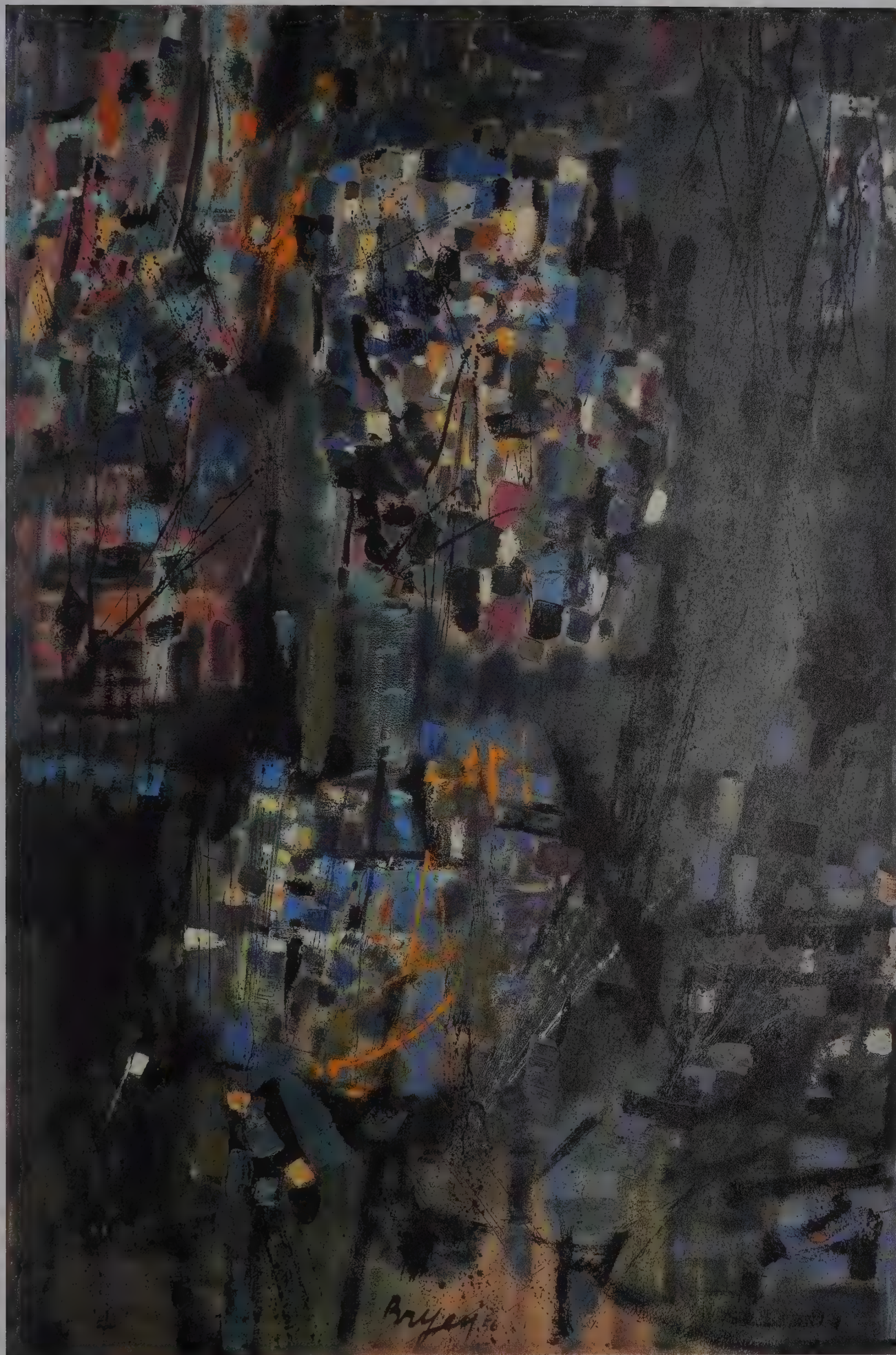
Tempera, sand, and
feathers on canvas,
29 1/2 x 29 1/2 in.
(75 x 75 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

world wars, in spite of Brancusi and Arp, the postwar era saw an emphasis on the human figure confronting the tragedy of history. Abstract sculpture rose to this challenge, its development supported more by a few galleries (Breteau, de France, Jeanne Bucher, Dina Vierny, Louis Carré) than by the state. To be sure, abstract painting and sculpture shared a refusal of narrative, but the new industrial materials offered more possibilities to sculptors than to painters.

At his death in 1957, Brancusi left a studio that

had become a symbolic center of modernism (see FIG. 8.80). The artists who visited him there saw works on his hand-hewn pedestals that would lead them in a variety of directions. Certain sculptures by Emile Gilioli, such as *The Sphere* (FIG. 9.70), clearly show a debt to Brancusi. In 1947 Gilioli, who had moved to Paris from Grenoble, met the artists Denise René was beginning to support: Jean Dewasne, Jean Deyrolle, and Vasarely—all converts to a purely geometric construction, as far from Arp's biomorphism as from the dramatic works of



9.67

Camille Bryen
(1907–1977)

Precambrian, 1956

Oil on canvas,
57½ x 38⅞ in.
(146 x 97 cm)

Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.68
 Villeglé (Jacques de la
 Villeglé) (b. 1926)
Rue Taylor, 1959
 Torn posters pasted
 on paper,
 37 x 27 1/8 in.
 (94 x 69 cm)
 Galerie Sonia
 Zannettacci, Geneva

Giacometti, Richier, or César. Nevertheless, the panorama of sculpture was as various as that of painting: investigations of movement inspired by Calder, the elegant volumes of Etienne Hajdu, Berto Lardera's iron plaques, and César's welded structures, the reduction of forms to threads, playful zigzagging, or even imitations of architectural models. The art of the previous generation—Moholy-Nagy, Pevsner, El Lissitzky, González, Gorin—also still made itself felt in the abstract sculpture of the 1950s.

In 1950 Jean Dewasne organized "Lectures on Abstract Art" with the support of the review *Art d'aujourd'hui*, edited by the architect André Bloc; these constituted the principal activity of the Atelier d'Art Abstrait, founded with Edgar Pillet on rue de la Grande-Chaumière, which was frequented by young American painters in Paris. The subjects of mural art, sculpture, and painting were given equal attention. Dewasne was convinced that art had to have a social purpose, but he wondered about the means. He introduced techniques



such as the aluminum support and Isorel (hardboard) covered in industrial paint, and he also appropriated existing forms. An homage to serial music, *Antisculpture: Homage to Anton Webern*, was the first of his “anti-sculptures”: a shell of a car constituted the support for a very colorful geometric composition. There was no irony in the choice of this product of the French automobile industry, which was then at the forefront of national industrial regeneration (FIG. 9.71). Conversely, the “metamatic” sculptures of Jean Tinguely, which

sometimes self-destructed, were quite removed from reality, displaying the chaotic convulsions of useless robots (FIG. 9.72).

The work of César Domela, who was born in 1900, did not get the exposure it deserved until after 1945. The modern concept of the relief owes much to this artist, the only one in France who could be compared to Max Bill in Switzerland. Domela introduced curves and spirals into the orthogonal structures that he took from the De Stijl movement: on a flat ground of colored

9.69

Raymond Hains
(b. 1926)

Waterlilies, 1961

Torn posters pasted on
a panel of zinc,
39 ⁵/₁₆ x 39 ⁵/₁₆ x 2 ³/₄ in.
(100.5 x 100.5 x .7 cm)
Musée Nationale d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



9.70

Emile Gilioli (b. 1911)

The Sphere, 1947

Polished bronze on plaster pedestal,
45 3/4 x 22 3/8 x 30 3/4 in. (116 x 57 x 78 cm)
Musée National d'Art Moderne,
Centre Georges Pompidou



9.71

Jean Dewasne

(1921–1999)

Antisculpture: Homage to Anton Webern, 1952

Paint and enamel on aluminum,
59 1/2 x 48 3/8 x 36 1/4 in. (151 x 123 x 92 cm)
Musée National d'Art Moderne,
Centre Georges Pompidou



9.72

Jean Tinguely
(1925–1991)

Metamatic Number 1,
1959

Metal and wood, electric
motor, painted black,
37 3/4 x 33 7/16 x 17 1/16 in.
(96 x 85 x 44 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

wood, contrasting materials such as wood, aluminum, glass, Plexiglas, and brass create lines and planes, textures sufficing to create colored effects. The pieces were designated by numbers in series, sometimes matched with indications of colors: *Relief No. 61* (FIG. 9.73), *Relief, éclat en rouge et violet*, no. 22 (1947, Centre d'Art et de Communication, Vaduz). Very rarely he strayed outside the realm of pure form, as in *Relief*,

petit monument à la mémoire de mes anciens amis Piet et Does, no. 113 (1967, Paris, Ralph Lederman collection), an homage to Piet Mondrian and Theo van Doesburg. In the rough-and-tumble of sculptural experimentation in Paris, in which the very concept of sculpture was being questioned, and which culminated in the radical rupture with tradition of the 1960s, Domela's body of work appears particularly original.



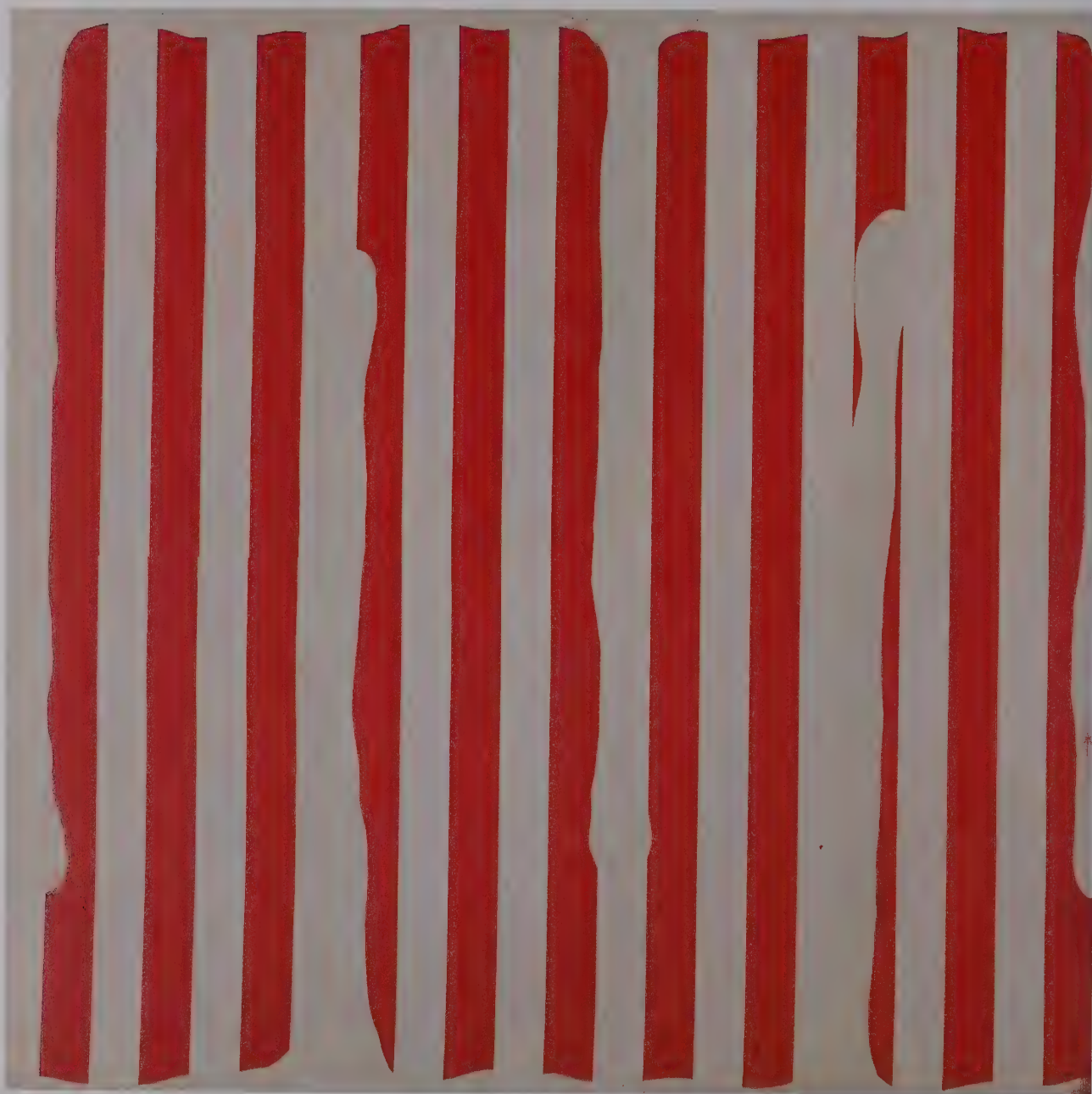
9.73

Domela (César
Domela-Niewenhuis)
(1900–1992)

Relief No. 61, 1959

Carved macassar, brass,
and steel on painted
wood, 33 x 47 1/16 in.
(84 x 120 cm)
Centre d'Art et de
Communication,
Vaduz, Lichtenstein

METAMORPHOSES
OF PAINTING AND SCULPTURE
AFTER 1960



9.74

Daniel Buren (b. 1938)

Painting with Indefinite Forms, May 1966

Acrylic on canvas woven with cotton, 74 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 75 in. (189.5 x 190.5 cm)

Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou

Galleries and Salons: New Orientations

At the end of the 1950s, contemporary art galleries experienced a brief period of euphoria before the market for French abstract art collapsed in 1961. Saint-Germain-des-Prés attracted new dealers: Iris Clert and Claude Bernard set up shop on the rue des Beaux-Arts; Pierre Loeb exhibited his painters at Galerie Pierre on the rue de Seine, where Galerie Jeanne Bucher continued its activities after the death of its director and where the Swiss Rudolf Stadler moved; Karl Flinker chose rue du Bac. During the 1960s another outpost was occupied on the Right Bank in the eighth arrondissement by Jean Larcade, Aimé Maeght, Mathias Fels, and Louis Carré, who had returned from the United States.³⁵ Galerie Louise Leiris, which had taken over Galerie Simon in 1941, moved to rue La Boétie, then rue de Monceau; it would not take on any more new artists with the exception of Yves Rouvre and Eugène de Kermadec. Conversely, Galerie Maeght launched into a strategy of conquest, indispensable due to the profound transformation of the art market in Paris. Indeed, starting in the early 1960s, American competition overturned a situation established since the Liberation, in which representational art and various forms of abstraction had shared the attention of art lovers.

During the 1960s and 1970s Paris and art were in complete tumult, but also at a peak of creativity. Artists skillfully took advantage of the competition between galleries, and Paris saw the arrival of painters from Spain, northern Europe, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, and beyond. But the essential question from now on was the relationship with the United States. It has often surprised people that Pollock's work was only shown in Paris beginning in 1951 (notably at Galerie Facchetti); he was just a small part of the American artistic contingent. Around 1960, Robert Rauschenberg, Ad Reinhardt, and Bill Copley were among the painters who visited Paris—where they met with dealers, critics, and writers—but they did not live there. Galleries in Paris that represented the most significant contemporary art in the 1970s—Jean Fournier, Daniel Templon, Karl Flinker, Ileana Sonnabend—were faced with growing competition from the American market. A host of smaller galleries continued to defend surrealist or abstract art at all costs. The press was divided between eclecticism and sectarianism. The geography of the Paris art market was

itself less and less stable. The opening of the Centre Georges Pompidou at the beginning of 1977 provoked two successive waves of galleries moving in or out of the Beaubourg area, then around the Bastille area when the construction of the new opera was announced. But nothing could prevent the gallery closings and bankruptcies of 1991, the “black year.”³⁶ Since then there has been a return to the refurbished Marais and to Saint-Germain-des-Prés. On the positive side, the Foire Internationale d'Art Contemporain (FIAC), beginning in 1974, has compensated, ten days out of the year, for the loss of exhibition space in Paris. Even if it did not resolve the hazards of the Parisian market in the international context, it played an indisputable role in the evolution of the taste for contemporary art, a phenomenon never seen in France, which decisively marked the last twenty years of the twentieth century.

In the fall of 1959, the creation of the Association Française pour la Manifestation Biennale Internationale des Jeunes Artistes, known as the Biennale de Paris, offered an alternative to the Salon de Mai, initiated in 1945, which was regarded as less and less innovative. The graphic artist Pierre Faucheux was entrusted with the design of the poster and the initial installation, hosted by the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris. Forty-two countries were represented in 1959; by 1963 there were sixty. The Biennale was the favored place for multidisciplinary events or still more conceptual ones, such as mail art. It was there that the new Italian figuration was introduced (led by Antonio Recalcati), that Eduardo Arroyo developed one of the first collective works of critical figuration (on the theme of the slaughterhouse), that one heard new works by Pierre Boulez, Iannis Xenakis, François Bayle, and Ivo Malec, and that one could see artists' films, notably those by Robert Lapoujade.

Another revolution in the history of the Salons was the new orientation of the Salon de la Jeune Peinture in 1964. The “JP,” which would end in 1983, became a hothouse of critical figuration with the help of the critic Michel Troche. In 1967 Daniel Buren, Olivier Mosset, Michel Parmentier, and Niele Toroni, the “four musketeers” of provocative “anti-painting,” became known for the first time under the label BMPT.³⁷ They organized

a protest at the Salon in January 1967, handing out leaflets proclaiming "We Are Not Painters." They created works on the spot, then replaced them with a banner reading "Buren, Mosset, Parmentier, Toroni Are Not Exhibiting." Similar events continued through September 1967. By the end of the year, Buren's works represented the culmination of a process, begun in 1965, of eliminating the subjective parameters of painting, in the course of which he established a compositional format, painted on different materials, consisting of equal vertical colored bands, $3\frac{1}{16}$ inches (8.7 cm) wide (FIG. 9.74). This "tool for seeing" is intended to point out different aspects of the space where it is placed. This space took the dimension of Paris itself in 1977 with the work *Les Couleurs*, which consisted of fifteen flags hung on different landmarks visible from the Centre Pompidou.

The Changing Role of Museums

The activity of the Musée National d'Art Moderne seemed to slow until the 1973 arrival of the Swede Pontus Hultén, who took charge of its reorganization and its move to Beaubourg. Meanwhile François Mathey, director of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, a great lover of the works of Dubuffet and Klein (his museum housed the Klein retrospectives in 1960 and in 1969), was seen by some critics as the only person in the French museum world taking an interest in contemporary art. We owe to him provocative exhibitions like *Antagonismes* in 1961, the event organized by the group BMPT in 1967, and in 1972 the first retrospective of contemporary art in France, organized in a climate of virulent protest. André Malraux, minister of state in charge of cultural affairs from 1959 to June 1969, placed individuals sympathetic to art in key positions, notably Gaëtan Picon, named to the Direction Générale des Arts et des Lettres, and gave them very broad powers.³⁸ But Malraux's attitude toward contemporary art remained ambiguous. When in 1965 Jean Cassou took his anticipated retirement from the Musée National d'Art Moderne, the minister allowed the institution to languish without a chief curator for more than two years. Other spaces emerged to fill the gap, a development that accentuated the nomadic aspect of contemporary art in Paris. At the Galeries Nationales du Grand Palais, the

first retrospective of Francis Bacon's work was held in 1971, under the responsibility of the CNAC (Centre National d'Art Contemporain). As for the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, which unveiled a redesigned interior in 1961, it took a deliberately topical orientation.

One of the best initiatives of the newly formed Direction de l'Action Culturelle of the Conseil de Paris was to create in 1967 a satellite branch given to the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, called the ARC (Animation Recherche Confrontation). Under the direction of Pierre Gaudibert,³⁹ ARC became a place one went to discover artists, attend electronic music performances (by the ensemble 2E2M, which anticipated Boulez's IRCAM), and hear lectures and debates on the May 1968 generation's favorite topics. In all of Paris, for some thirty years, ARC remained the only truly multidisciplinary and, more important, experimental art space. In 1967, too, André Malraux's ministry created the CNAC (Centre National d'Art Contemporain), intended to compensate for the hostility or lack of interest that artists attributed to the MNAM, which at the time paid attention only to the work of dead artists. Very soon, thanks to the sustained efforts of its directors Blaise Gauthier and Germain Viatte, CNAC assumed an indispensable function: buying, exhibiting, and documenting the work of living artists, French and foreign, who were supposed to be difficult for the general public: Sam Francis, Josef Sima, Dado, Edward Kienholz, Joseph Beuys, and Grzegorz Kowalski.

In retrospect, ARC and CNAC emerged as two extraordinary tools for the propagation of contemporary art, almost perfect models of museums open to living and experimental art—the very sort one hoped would be created within the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1977, when the collections and documentations of MNAM and CNAC were brought together there. The exhibitions of the Centre Georges Pompidou during its first ten years highlighted above all the dual openness required of the French capital if France were to maintain an honorable position vis-à-vis other European countries and the United States. That is, she would need both to recognize the historical roles played in twentieth-century art by foreign capitals (Berlin, New York, Moscow) and to acknowledge the contribution of a non-Parisian French avant-garde, like Supports-Surfaces.



The “art of Paris” still existed, but it now had to be defined as “art being shown in Paris”: it was French, European, international. This phenomenon would be underscored in the 1980s. Between the effects of decentralization—for example, the creation in 1982 of FRAC (Fonds Régionaux d’Art Contemporain [Regional funds for contemporary art])—and the impact of globalization, the French capital would only demonstrate a truly local identity after the late 1960s in the area of public commissions and architecture.

A “School of Nice” in Paris

An early example of the impact of regionalization on the art of Paris is what the critic Claude Rivière in 1960 called a School of Nice. “Why not, after all? Indeed, we are glad to see the birth of decentralization, and too

bad for Paris, because it is almost impossible to dream there, and that’s why artists, in these times of blinding bright lights, come to Provence to rediscover an interior poetry and freedom.”⁴⁰ “School of Nice” applied to a number of artists linked by birth or by certain stages of their careers to the Côte d’Azur: Arman (Armand Pierre Fernandez), Ben (Benjamin Vautier), Louis Cane, César (César Baldaccini), Daniel Dezeuze, Noël Dolla, Yves Klein, Bernard Pagès, Martial Raysse, Patrick Saytour, Bernar Venet (in his beginnings), and Claude Viallat. The artistic life of the avant-garde in the 1960s was taken over by a long list of southerners—and we have to refer to them as southerners and not simply Niçois: they belonged to the French Mediterranean landscape, a vast region with many distinctive areas, a place where people are strongly attached to their roots that includes Marseilles as well as Montpellier, the heights of the Cévennes, and the borders of Catalonia. That is why the “School

9.75

Ben (Benjamin Vautier)
(b. 1935)

Ben’s Shop, 1958–73

Various elements
assembled from the
artist’s gallery in Nice,
11 ft. 5 3/4 in. x 16 ft.
4 7/8 in. x 11 ft. 5 3/4 in.
(3.5 x 5 x 3.5 m)
Musée National d’Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

9.77

Yves Klein
(1928–1962)

Blue Harmony
(RE 10), 1960

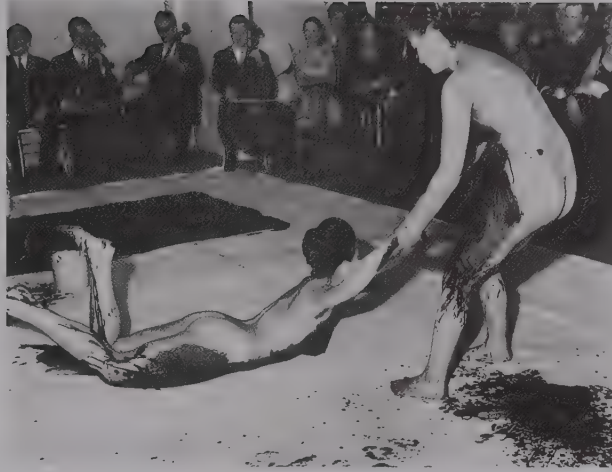
Sponges, pebbles,
and dry pigment
in synthetic resin
on plywood,
78 x 64 1/4 x 5 3/8 in.
(198 x 164.5 x 13.5 cm)
Stedelijk Museum,
Amsterdam



of Nice” remains an expression of convenience,⁴¹ for drawing attention to a phenomenon typical of the years 1955 to 1975: many of the most prominent artists divided their time between Paris and the south of France or abroad.

A key figure in the emergence of Nice was Ben, who had settled in Nice in 1949. In 1958 he created a gallery in a former record shop, which he first called Laboratoire 32 and then Galerie Ben Doute de Tout (the “Ben doesn’t believe in anything gallery”). This was the setting for a series of subversive exhibitions (including his own “Vomit Pictures” of 1958), and it became a node of the international Fluxus network beginning in 1960. Galerie Ben Doute de Tout lasted until 1973, when it was disassembled and reconstructed as an art work titled *Ben’s Shop* (FIG. 9.75) at the Centre Pompidou.

Parisian recognition came to the “School of Nice” via a 1965 article by Otto Hahn in *L’Express*, which was followed by a short presentation in *Actualités cinématographiques Gaumont*. After his article on the School of Nice in *Les Lettres françaises*, the poet and



9.77 (above)

Yves Klein (1928–1962)

Performance of *Anthropometry of the Blue Period* and *Symphony Monoton-Silence*, March 9, 1960

9.78 (below)

Yves Klein (1928–1962)

Untitled Anthropometry (ANT 82), 1960
Pure pigment and synthetic resin on paper laid down on canvas, 61 1/8 x 111 1/4 in. (156.5 x 282.5 cm)
Musée National d’Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou





9.79
 Claude Viallat (b. 1936)
Untitled (No. 40), 1968
 Dyes from eosin and
 methylene blue on
 canvas, 110 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 76 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
 (280 x 194 cm)
 Musée National d'Art
 Moderne, Centre
 Georges Pompidou

critic Jacques Lepage was asked to stop contributing to the French Communist Party's weekly. The question of regionalism was being raised more and more frequently in France because of the awakening interest in local dialects or languages (Breton, Catalan, Occitan). There were heated debates, which included those artists concerned with the activities of the regions: "For me, regional cultures have no meaning in 1977, any more than a national culture would have," answered Paul-Armand Gette to one of Ben's questionnaires on the Occitan (Provençal) culture,⁴² while Patrick Saytour responded to the same questionnaire in the Occitan dialect.⁴³ The context of the exhibition *À propos de Nice*, held at the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1977 and entrusted to Ben (who in the meantime had made connections with the New York art world) was therefore very different from the first playful and sophomoric events in Nice in the 1960s. "It is necessary today," wrote the museum's director, Pontus Hultén, in the catalogue's preface, "to examine creation in other cities in France." Seventeen years after Claude Rivière's remarks, the matter was resolved on the national level. But the declaration in favor of art from the French provinces should not mask the fact that at the same time competition with Europe (particularly Italy and Germany)

9.80
 Claude Viallat
 (b. 1936)
Market Parasol, 1978
 Acrylic on umbrella
 canvas,
 149 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 116 $\frac{1}{8}$ in.
 (380 x 295 cm)
 Musée d'Art Moderne,
 Saint-Etienne



and the United States was an integral part of the history of contemporary art.

The Mediterraneans brought to Paris a group excitement and a "solar" energy. First, there were the Nouveaux Réalistes, with Arman, César, Klein, and Martial Raysse; then Fluxus, linked to the teachings of John Cage in New York, radical, anticommercial, experimental, more Niçois and international than Parisian; finally, Support-Surface and then Supports-Surfaces, with Viallat, Dezeuze, Saytour, and Lepage. The penchant for color and the constant movement from one medium to another and one material to another were their common points. Among those who actually came from Nice, Yves Klein merits particular attention.

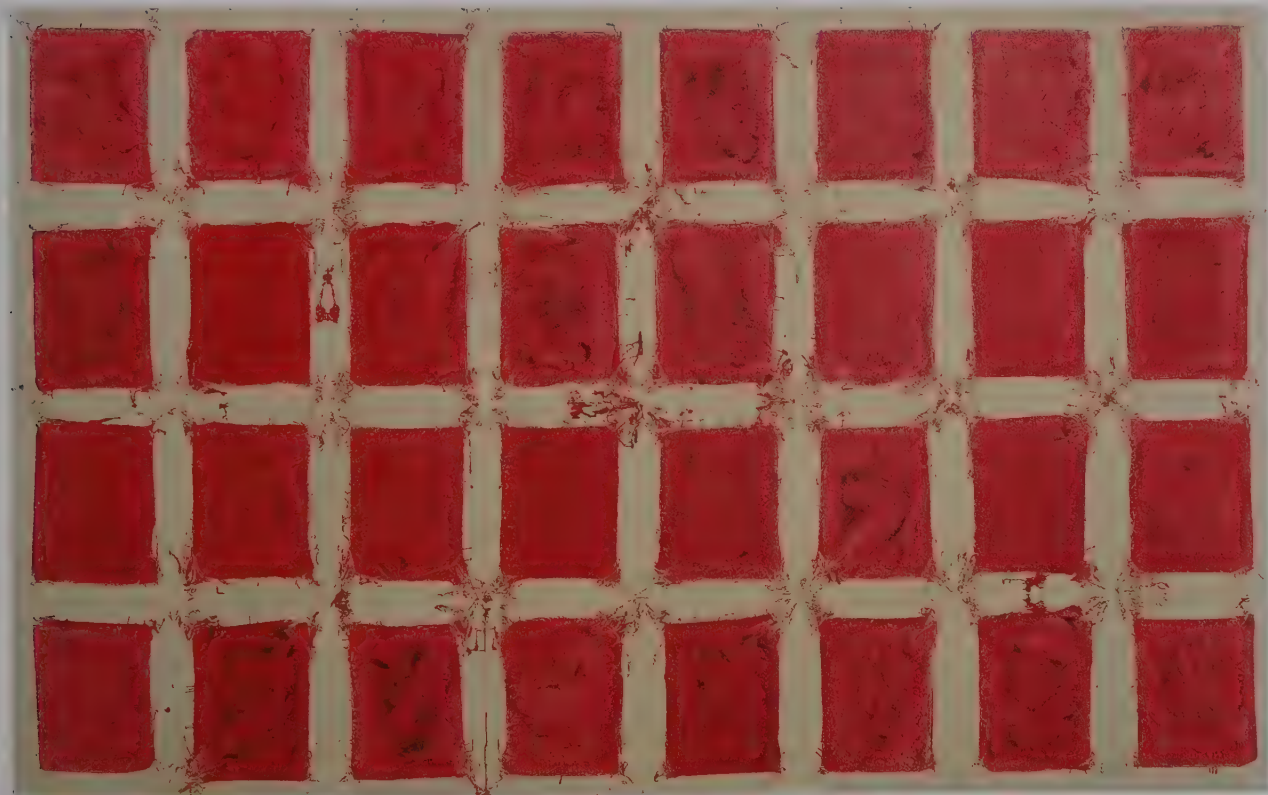
"An intuitive genius," as Nicolas Charlet called him,⁴⁴ "Yves the Monochrome," as the artist styled himself for a 1957 exhibition at Galerie Iris Clert, made series of pictorial objects that he integrated into a global vision of existence. He worked as a painter, a craftsman, an engineer, and he organized art events in Paris that parallel the Happenings introduced by Allan Kaprow in

New York at this time, accompanied by films, photographs, articles, and lectures.⁴⁵ The “dematerialization” of art that Klein sought had to do with the concrete transformation of pictorial matter. With the aid of the chemical company Rhône-Poulenc, the painter developed an opaque binding material of ether and petroleum extracts, which would adhere to any base and preserved the full brilliance of color pigments. He focused on blue and applied for a patent for the pigmented substance on May 19, 1960, under the name International Klein Blue (IKB). However, Klein also created monochrome works in other colors, including pink, red, orange, white, green, violet, yellow, and “monogold.”

Klein’s first monochromes appeared in Paris, notably in May 1957, in two complementary exhibitions, one at Colette Allendy’s townhouse, the other at Iris Clert, mentioned above. At the former, on the ground floor, there were Reliefs and blue objects. On the first floor, in what had been the office of Allendy’s late husband, the psychoanalyst René Allendy, Klein had installed *Surfaces et blocs de sensibilité picturale: Intentions picturales* (Surfaces and solids of pictorial sensibility: pictorial

intentions). But these “surfaces” and “solids” belonged to the imagination: the room was empty, which perhaps constituted Klein’s ironic response to the idea of the informal or abstract.⁴⁶ At Iris Clert he presented monochromatic canvases and a blue sponge on a tall stick, which represented the first public appearance of “impregnated matter,” as Klein called it (FIG. 9.77).

On April 28, 1958, a small card signed by Pierre Restany invited viewers to Iris Clert for an exhibition, later called *Le Vide* (Emptiness). The gallery was emptied of its furniture, and its walls were painted white, to immerse the viewer in a “radiant pictorial ambiance.”⁴⁷ Clert offered blue cocktails to the guests, who received a card stamped with a small notched rectangle of blue paper. Yet *Le Vide* could not be reduced to an ephemeral, mundane event: for the first time, a deliberate act of mise-en-scène, what would come to be called “installation art,” replaced the conventional gallery exhibition. In seeking to create the experience of becoming permeated by or immersed in the space, Klein marked a milestone by overturning all previous forms of abstraction. The monochromes, the



9.81

Simon Hantaï
(b. 1922)

Tabula, 1980

Acrylic and oil on folded
and unfolded canvas,
9 ft. 4 7/8 in. x 15 ft. 3 in.
(2.9 x 4.7 m)

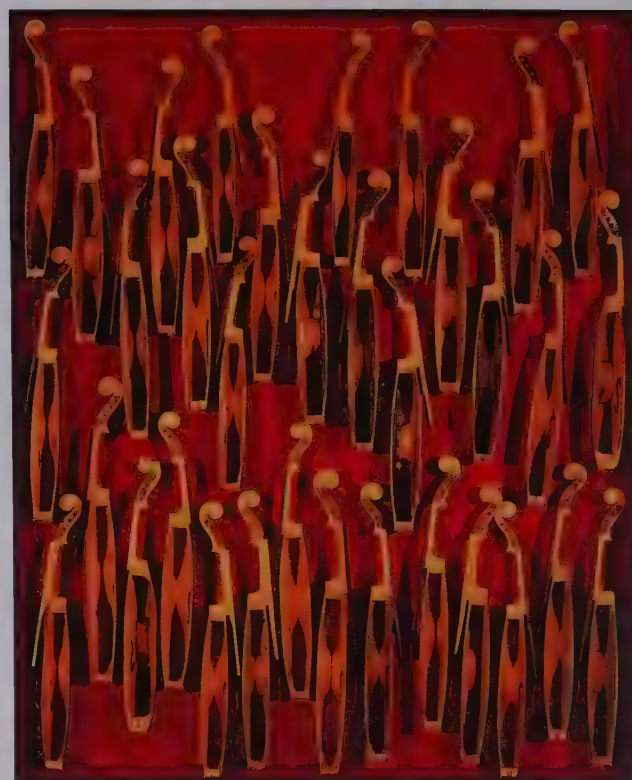
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

9.83

Arman (Armand Pierre Fernandez) (b. 1928)
Toccata and Fugue, 1962
 Sectioned violins mounted on wood, 64 7/8 x 52 3/8 x 5 1/6 in. (165 x 133 x 13.5 cm)
 Albright Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo; gift of Seymour H. Knox Jr.

prints of female bodies—especially the *Anthropométries* made in public at the Galerie Internationale d'Art Contemporain in the course of a memorable evening on March 9, 1960 (9.77 and 9.78)—and his permeated sponges completely shifted the current values in Parisian abstraction of the time, no doubt because “artistic” abstraction was not Klein’s concern. His poetics had to do with the physics of natural elements, on the one hand—water, earth, fire, air—and with human sensations; thus, the expansion of the body’s potential. The actual use of fire and water was yet to come: to make his *Peintures-feu* or “tableaux de feu” (Fire paintings) and burned prints, Klein enlisted as a partner the testing center of the natural gas company Gaz de France. He manipulated the nozzle himself, directing a flame at paper board while a fireman sprayed it with water. The result was unquestionably a work of beauty.

Klein extended his investigations into the conceptual realm with his so-called “Zones of Immaterial Pictorial Sensibility.” In a 1959 work which also implicitly criticized the gallery system and the assignment of commercial value to the artist’s work, he sold a number of “immaterial spaces” (for varying prices). In a performed ritual, the purchaser’s receipt was burnt and thrown into the Seine, together with half the payment for the work. The purchaser could resell the piece, but only



for double the initial cost—and of course, there was now no proof of ownership. Klein’s death in 1962 deprived the Parisian art world of an original and provocative voice, one who prefigured in his work an array of international art developments over the following decades.

Supports-Surfaces

Color, for Klein, was fundamental, and he proclaimed the struggle of color versus line, as if, circa 1960, the classic debate between line and color were still topical: he then transcended it in a single blow. But in 1970, for the painters grouped under the name Support-Surface, if color and the transformation of matter remained critical concerns, the battle to be waged had nothing to do with line. It was an ideological, political battle that bore on the notion of work, production, and structure and raised the question of artistic formalism in a capitalistic society.

The founder of Support-Surface was unquestionably Claude Viallat, although he never claimed that title and was one of the first to secede, after the exhibition in 1971 at the Cité Universitaire Internationale de Paris (where the movement was described in the plural as *Supports-Surfaces*).⁴⁸ Originally from Nîmes, Viallat, named professor at the École des Arts Décoratifs in Nice in 1964, soon met Nice’s artists. In 1966, at the Musée

9.82

Pierre Buraglio
 (b. 1939)
Masking, 1979–80
 Acrylic and strips of masking tape on tracing paper, 20 7/8 x 15 in. (53.1 x 38.1 cm)
 Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou



de Céret, he organized a first group exhibition with the writer Jacques Lepage, entitled *Impact I*. Soon joining the initial group of artists—Louis Cane, Daniel Dezeuze, Patrick Saytour, and Viallat—were Marcel Alocco, André-Pierre Arnal, Marc Devade, Noël Dolla, Bernard Pagès, Jean-Pierre Pincemin, and Henri Valensi. Paradoxically, these avant-gardists of the latter half of the 1960s caused much ink to flow in the Paris press by exhibiting in the provinces more than in the capital. In 1970 Pierre Gaudibert, who directed ARC, was the first to present in Paris, under the title *Support-Surface*, works by Dezeuze, Saytour, Valensi, Viallat, and by two “guests,” Vincent Bioulès and Marc Devade. It was in the exhibition *La Peinture en question* at the Musée du Havre in 1969, that Cane, Dezeuze, Saytour, and Viallat published their most explicit manifesto: “The object of painting is painting itself.” According to them, the work had to make “lyricism” and “expressive depth” disappear, a goal related to that of the American minimalists. But the works, especially those by Arnal, Saytour, and Viallat, belied this principle, evoking palpable emotion.

Although never an official part of the group *Supports-Surfaces*, Pierre Buraglio, Christian Jaccard, Jean-Michel Meurice, Michel Parmentier, and François Rouan raised similar questions concerning the foundations of painting. These artists shared an admiration for Henri Matisse’s late works, from his cutouts to very large canvases such as *Memory of Oceania* (Museum of Modern Art, New York) and an interest in Simon Hantaï. Starting in 1960, Hantaï had turned his back on surrealism and gestural abstraction to explore *pliage*, that is, paintings whose creation involves folding, knotting, or otherwise manipulating the canvas, which is painted or stained and then unfolded. He systematically developed this technique in series of works beginning with the *Mariales* of 1960 and including the *Tabulas* from 1975–81 (FIG. 9.81). The notion of working in series, the use of repetition (stripes, for example), the reprise of a single motif (Viallat’s “bean,” FIG. 9.79), and the resemblance to batik accentuated the confusion between painting and ornamental art. While the use of acrylic paint was a material factor affecting the brush stroke in painting, the use of staining, which Viallat systematically practiced, permitted an entirely new departure. Folding, sewing, stapling, nailing, braiding, tinting: these were

the verbs that described the gestures of the new *homo faber*. Materials formerly outside the realm of painting were utilized, such as sheets, oilcloth, or scraps of fabric; in the 1970s Viallat used tablecloths, lace, and umbrellas (FIG. 9.80). In 1975 Buraglio began the *Masquages* (Masking) series, old masking tape stuck to newspaper, Plexiglas, or tracing paper (FIG. 9.82); in the 1990s Parmentier worked with an oil stick on polyester film. Hantaï, who withdrew from the art world in 1982, returned in 1998 to exhibit in Paris his *Laissées* (Leavings), canvases that were revised, recut, enlarged, and restretched or silkscreened, a voluntary revision of a whole body of work, as if to demonstrate the essential artistic project of the 1960s: the end of painting and the refusal to “serve society blindly.”⁴⁹

There has certainly been reform, if not a revolution, in the methods of painting since *Supports-Surfaces*.



9.84
Arman (Armand Pierre Fernandez) (b. 1928)
Everyone's Time, 1985
Gare Saint-Lazare



9.85

César (César Baldaccini) (1921–1998)

Compression Ricard, 1962

Compacted automobile parts,
60 1/4 x 28 3/4 x 25 1/8 in. (153 x 73 x 65 cm)
Musée National d'Art Moderne,
Centre Georges Pompidou

But there were also remarkable innovations in the group's modes of exhibition. The picture rail was no longer the sole element of support: Viallat hung canvases without stretchers from the ceiling or on horizontal bars; Jean-Michel Meurice made large, striped assemblages that unfolded, which he called *Mur-Sol* (Wall-ground) paintings, while Takesada Matsutani, a Japanese artist living in Paris, from the group Gutai, increased the potential of the mur-sol approach by making it the principle of enormous installations.

When Claude Viallat knotted cords and set up nets (*Travaux, noeuds et épissures* [Construction work, knots, and splices], 1969–71), assembled wood and stones, and painted pebbles (*Galets, empreintes*, [Pebbles, printed], 1972) he was conscious of the anthropological aspect of what he was doing, which he did not separate from his process as a painter.⁵⁰ But he was not a sculptor. Alongside the fifteen or so painters representative of the Supports-Surfaces phenomenon, only two sculptors can be cited, Toni Grand and Bernard Pagès. Both often worked with natural materials, like driftwood, reinforced or transformed, and Pagès, an artist who deliberately held himself apart, recognized his debt to the Brancusi studio (which he saw in 1959 when it was first reconstructed at the Musée National d'Art Moderne), notably in the use of pedestals of wood and stone, and their systematic or aleatory use in his sculptures.

Pagès explored external space, the work placed *outside*, and preferred the Niçois landscape. One may say that his rural *démarche* represents a rejection of a form of industrial sculpture that held sway in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵¹ According to Pagès, his practice was not rural but “rustic”—his tools were those of a builder of walls or terraces. But in fact his work was mannerist: the colors, play of textures, and contrasts independent of daylight, constituted an artistic procedure. Starting with concepts of series, chains, combinations, he arranged elements that were small in dimension, and then, as soon as he could work in large areas, he dealt with elements of large scale and considerable weight. He used plaster, his preferred painting support because of its porous surface, which set up a dialogue between the white of the paint and of the material, to coat pieces of tile or cinder-block, which then could be mounted on more noble or exotic elements, like marble or palm-tree sections, to form his well-known Columns (FIG. 9.84).



The Object and the Real World

Certain of Pagès's startling constructions shown at Ivry-sur-Seine in 1988 call to mind a very different form of sculpture, that of Arman, because of the systematic use of elements from the industrial world like tin, rebar, and oil drums. In Nice in 1958, Arman began to work on the object with the series *Object Impressions* (*Allures d'objet*), for which he pressed or threw inked objects against the canvas, followed by the series *Dustbins* and *Accumulations* in 1959 and 1960. In *Cuttings and Rages* in 1961, two series of public displays anticipating performance art, he destroyed objects. The obviously close connection between Arman and Yves Klein, who had been fellow students at the *Ecole des Arts Décoratifs* in Nice in the late 1940s, is affirmed by Arman's "portrait" of Klein, composed of objects belonging to Klein displayed in a transparent container, and Arman's exhibition *Fullness* at Galerie Iris Clert in 1960, a response to Klein's 1958 show *Emptiness*. Arman also did a series using fire as a basic element.

César had been making works out of scrap metal since 1947. But there is a jump between his works of the fifties and his *Compressions* of the 1960s (FIG. 9.85); compacting automobile parts and other materials, help define, along with Arman's *Object Impressions*, the decade of the object. Arman, Ben Vautier, Martial Raysse, Robert Malaval, and Bernar Venet all turned toward collections of things, each in a different way. Furniture, neon, plastics, car chrome, motors, wooden or plastic toys: scrap items or commercial objects were appropriated, manipulated, filled, broken, nailed, or glued. Unlike the theories of *Supports-Surfaces*, it was not

pictorial demonstration that counted but the artist's power over the "product," whatever it was. The reference to Marcel Duchamp was explicit, but while Duchamp made unique pieces or works in limited editions, sometimes in the greatest secrecy, these artists worked in series, often ostentatiously: provocation was always in the air. Profusion, "plenitude," and accumulations were also a way of acknowledging the flood of material consumption inundating France.

Nouveau Réalisme, which the critic Pierre Restany founded in 1960 during a gathering at Yves Klein's apartment, where Tinguely joined with Arman, Raysse, and César, initially brought together nine artists, but would eventually account for a large set of artistic practices relating to the object, and in the 1960s would represent a wave of creativity as impressive as the lyrical or geometric abstraction of the preceding years. Daniel Spoerri,⁵⁴ an artist of Romanian origin who immigrated to Switzerland in his youth and moved to Paris in 1959, created "trap-pictures" (*tableaux-pièges*), which, according to him, inaugurated a method of assemblage based on the "truth" of a situation. "The trap-picture is an intellectual position. . . . These cerebral gymnastics allowed me to create the link between the found object, the found situation, and its theatricalization."⁵⁵ Rid of its functional usefulness, an object was introduced into another arrangement, such as jars of butterflies or vases of dried flowers: once again, homage must be paid to Duchamp, which Spoerri explicitly did (*Eaten by Marcel Duchamp*, 1964, Arman collection), Duchamp being the first to question the very framework of art and its specific "objects." Like Arman, who dedicated his

9.86

Daniel Spoerri
(b. 1930)

Robert's Table, 1961

Assemblage of objects
on painted wood,
27½ x 63 in.
(70 x 160 cm)
Museum Ludwig,
Cologne, Germany



9.87
Jacques Monory
(b. 1934)
Murder No. 1, 1968
Oil on canvas,
64 x 154 in.
(163 x 391 cm)
Musée d'Art Moderne,
Saint-Etienne

assemblages to his friends (*Portrait-Robot d'Yves Klein*, *Le Monochrome*, 1960, private collection), Spoerri titled certain trap-paintings as if they formed “emblematic portraits” or “slices of life,” for example *Le Petit Déjeuner de Kichka* (Kichka’s Breakfast; 1960, Museum of Modern Art, New York) and *La Table de Robert* (FIG. 9.86). With such titles Spoerri gave each work a story, anecdotal, insignificant in that it conveyed nothing more than an everyday act, suddenly elevated to the rank of an event. Artists exhibiting or working in Paris from the 1960s to the 1980s brought a significant novelistic element to their activities, in the sense that artistic activity took on meaning when it was explicitly attached to a political and social context, or to a personal, intimate one. It was the story—public or private, historic or narrative—that gave meaning to the work.

The title of the first ARC exhibition in 1967, *The World in Question*, reflected a mindset still more eager to denounce the crimes of history than at the Liberation. Exhibitions of artists sharing this tendency were promoted by the critic G rard Gassiot-Talabot under the rubric of Narrative Figuration, conceived as true acts of protest; certain works were made collectively. But with the rise of activism directed against the Vietnam War,

this tendency became more pointedly political. In 1969 the Salon de la Jeune Peinture presented *Salle rouge pour le Vietnam*, conceived by twenty-four artists, among them Gilles Aillaud, Louis Cane, Pierre Buraglio, Henri Cueco (FIG. 9.89), and G rard Tisserand, which was followed in 1969 and 1970 by *Police et culture 1* and *11*.

The ARC exhibition had certain precedents: in 1964 the Mus e d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris had presented *Mythologies quotidiennes* (Everyday mythologies); and in 1965 Galerie Creuze showed *La Figuration narrative dans l’art contemporain*. The former, its title inspired by Roland Barthes’s *Mythologies*, published in 1957, set the general tone. Eduardo Arroyo, Bertini, Leonardo Cremonini (FIG. 9.88), Dado, Peter Klasen, Jacques Monory (FIG. 9.87), Bernard Rancillac, Jean-Pierre Raynaud, Antonio Recalcati, Herv  T l maque, and Jan Voss explored the baleful or ambiguous charms of leisure activities and showed accidents and crime in everyday life. Several denounced American aggression: support of Cuba and North Vietnam was a given for painters for whom art *was* politics (some, like Henri Cueco and Michel Parr , were then members of the Communist Party, and all had contact with the left or the extreme left of the period). Arroyo continued to

express horror at the pro-Franco regime he had fled in 1958, but he also attacked artists he felt were taken over by the system, like Salvador Dalí, Miró, and Duchamp, who was the subject of “assassination” in a series of 1965 paintings by Arroyo, Antonio Recalcati, and Gilles Aillaud that include an enormous polyptych, *Vivre et laisser mourir, ou la fin tragique de Marcel Duchamp* (Live and Let Die, or The Tragic End of Marcel Duchamp), which caricatured Pop artists and their links to the master of the readymade, depicted in a coffin.

Most of the artists associated with narrative figuration and the Jeune Peinture group remained faithful to the choices they made in the 1960s. The Coopérative des Malassis (Cooperative of the disestablished), created in 1970 around Henri Cueco, Lucien Fleury, Jean-Claude Latil, Michel Parré, and Gérard Tisserand, pursued collective work for ten years that provided a running commentary on the vagaries of consumer society and the injustices of the bourgeois order. At ARC in 1970, a number of artists including Cueco, Latil, Parré, and Tisserand exhibited their reactions to the case of Gabrielle Russier (a teacher who committed suicide in prison, having been convicted of corruption of a minor after having an affair with one of her students), under the title *Vérité sur un fait divers* (The truth about a news item).

In the 1980s an obsession with the theme of memory created a certain distance from such heated engagement. Irony was manifested through various cultural quotations. Gudmundur Gudmundsson, known as Ferró, then Erró,

born in Iceland in 1932, had arrived in Paris in 1958. His work (FIG. 9.90) is the perfect example of a conception of political painting as running commentary (in series) based on constant “pillaging” of globalized images. Borrowing the style of comic books to ridicule the American dream of comfort and the kitsch style of Chinese Maoism to mock the totalitarianism of the Great Helmsman, and using cinematic, photographic, and computer-derived imagery, Erró constructed a very personal, “allover” style, using violent images readable by everyone, intended for large-scale exhibition spaces; in his gigantic *For Pol Pot, Tuol Sleng S.21* (1994), he used a palette of black and gray (probably in homage to Picasso’s *Guernica*) to evoke the worst of contemporary crimes, genocide and torture.⁵⁴

Personal Mythologies and Histories

Paris is a city where Latin cultures are privileged over Nordic ones. Greco-Roman history is present everywhere. The pictorial domain is no exception, in spite of the extraordinary crossbreeding of styles and images that began in the 1960s. Moreover, there are close links between an entire generation and the culture of the 1930s, when André Masson and Georges Bataille were at the height of their prominence and Jacques Lacan began his career; their points of reference were Nietzsche and Freud, on the one hand, and North American ethnology



9.88

Leonardo Cremonini
(b. 1925)

Free Time, 1980–82

Oil on canvas,
51 7/8 x 115 1/8 in.
(131 x 292.5 cm)

Private collection





9.89 (opposite)
 Henri Cueco (b. 1929)
The Barricade, Vietnam, 1968
 Oil on canvas,
 78 3/4 x 78 3/4 in.
 (200 x 200 cm)
 Private collection

9.90
 Erró (Gudmundur Gudmundsson)
 (b. 1932)
Chariot of Fire, 1983
 Oil on canvas,
 77 1/8 x 38 1/8 in.
 (196 x 97 cm)
 Musée des Beaux-Arts,
 Dole

9.91

Gérard Garouste
(b. 1946)

Lucretia, 1983

Oil on canvas,
78 ¾ x 96 ½ in.
(200 x 245 cm)
Fondation Cartier pour
l'Art Contemporain,
Paris

(via the work of Claude Lévi-Strauss), on the other. In the 1980s, painters like Jean-Michel Alberola and Gérard Garouste took up the brush of Masson, making paintings with classical or literary references, working in series, and using internal references and obsessive repetition as part of a system of creation. Garouste gained attention with paintings such as his 1981–82 *Orion the Classical*, *Orion the Indian* (Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou) then his 1983 *Lucretia* (FIG. 9.91), while Alberola adopted the myth of Actaeon, signing his works ACTEON FECIT,

and developed a veritable “novel” on canvas and paper on the theme of Susanna and the Elders (FIG. 9.94). Pierre Klossowski, the brother of Balthus, was closer to André Masson’s generation, and, like him, marked by the era of Georges Bataille’s journal *Acéphale* and *Minotaure*. Klossowski re-created the mythological figure of Diana, drawn at various points in the 1950s in the clutches of Actaeon (*Diana and Acteon*, FIG. 9.93), followed by erotic illustrations of his wife Denise as the character Roberte in his novel *Roberte, ce soir* (1954).⁵⁵ References to the art and culture of antiquity are





9.92

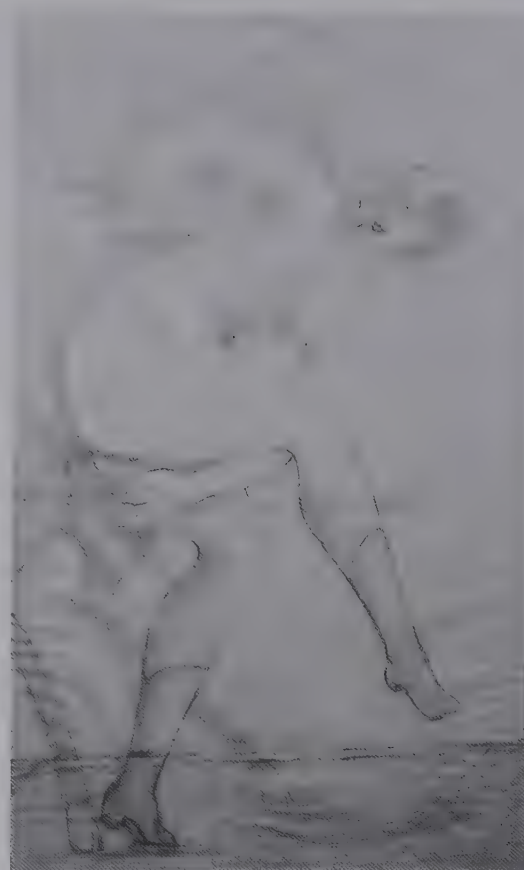
Anne Poirier (b. 1942)
and Patrick Poirier
(b. 1942)

The Death of Ephialtes,
1982

Marble and bronze;
overall 118 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 59 in.
(300 x 150 cm),
eye: 98 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 47 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(250 x 120 x 100 cm),
other element:
59 x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(150 x 100 x 100 cm),
flesh and lightning:
9 ft. 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. x 16 ft. 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ in.
(3 x 5 m)
Gori collection, Celle's
Farm, Santomato, Italy

considered one of the aspects of postmodernism, whose most talented representatives in Paris in sculpture are Anne and Patrick Poirier, creators of facsimiles of ruined cities and fragments of imaginary antiques. Their monumental pieces evoke forgotten epics, for example the beautiful series *Jupiter et les Géants-Mimas* from Hesiod's *Theogony* (*Mimas 1*, 1982–83; Musée Départemental, Epinal), where the legend of Ephialtes is told (FIG. 9.92).

What are artists after when they turn away from well-established methods and modes of painting? Take, for example, the Christian Boltanski group, whose *envois*—neither conceptual art nor mail art but both at the same time—were the main event at the Biennale de Paris in 1972, in the section organized by Jean-Marc Poinot. Such artists want to take stock of their past, make photographs of themselves, their studios, their intimate moments, or life's most ordinary places. Postmodernism, which basically concerns itself with the



9.93
Pierre Klossowski
(1905–2001)
Diana and Acteon II,
1957
Black pencil on paper,
49 1/8 x 29 1/2 in.
(125 x 75 cm)
Private collection



9.94
Jean-Michel Alberola
(b. 1953)
*Susanna and the
Elders: The Regency,
or Intermediary
Painting*, 1984
Oil on canvas,
90 1/2 x 98 3/8 in.
(230 x 250 cm)
Musée d'Art
Contemporain,
Nîmes; collection
Carré d'Art

question of memory, found congenial this tactical rejection of the barrier between public and private, between art and life, and it gave the artist's body a central place; artistic activity was understood as an aspect of the life of the body (erotic, nutritional, practical), inscribed in time that was no longer static but in process. Hence the importance for artistic practice from the 1960s to the 1990s of video and "instant" photography (photo-booth pictures and Polaroids) and ordinary snapshots in series.⁵⁶

Annette Messager, Boltanski, Jean Le Gac, Paul-Armand Gette, and several others invented a kind of nonstop autobiography at the end of the 1960s, sometimes working in twos or in groups.⁵⁷ In 1968 the Cinéma Le Ranelagh screened *La Vie impossible de Christian Boltanski*, the artist's first film. Personal photographs composed silent narratives of the past: *La Plage à Berck* (The beach at Berck) comprises sixty-one black-and-white photographs under glass, which with calculated banality describe a seaside in the north of France (FIG. 9.96).⁵⁸ In 1972, at *Documenta 5*, the "Individual Mythologies" section welcomed Boltanski and Jean Le Gac. The latter showed his twenty-six *Cahiers* (Notebooks), in which sepia, color, and black-and-white photographs accompanied a list of his texts and envois from 1968 to 1971. Since 1971 Messager has made collections—*My Works*, *My Jealousies*, *My Trophies*, and *My Vows* (FIG. 9.97)—classifying objects according to roles she assumes in various mises en scène: "a mise en scène of the artist in the visual arts, a mise en scène of a woman artist in the visual arts and also a mise en scène of a woman in her everyday life."⁵⁹ Boltanski and Messager's work was anticipated in certain respects by Jean-Pierre Raynaud, who wanted to give his "readymade" objects a personal dimension (FIG. 9.95). Raynaud's method may seem less disturbing and innovative than the works of Messager, Boltanski, and Le Gac, but they share an interest in evoking a psychological response and also the aim of substituting for art an act, event, story, personal object, photograph, or commentary.

Dubuffet's Theaters of Memory series, which he began in 1975 shortly after finishing the Hourloupe cycle (1962–75), was shown at Galerie Claude Bernard in Paris in 1978. The works were created through a complex process that began with large paintings on paper, from which elements were selected and cut out and then



assembled on metal plates, as if making a maquette; finally, the combination of "choice morsels" was pasted to the panel.⁶⁰ Each panel evoked a "banal" episode of everyday life, with no narrative aspects aside from the gesticulations of the figures; the juxtaposition of the morsels of pure painting, or of graffiti, with figures of varying scale creates an allover effect in which the proximity of various parts is always a controlled surprise. "Order is but a rarity whereas disorder is ordinary . . . Disorder is almost always there," as Michel Serres has written.⁶¹ Yet Dubuffet created a logic out of chaotic events, using titles that referred to ordinary things, like *Easter Vacation* (1976), subjects with double meanings like *Coordinates/Addresses* (1978), and narratives like *Fabric of Episodes* (see FIG. 9.2).

9.95
Jean-Pierre Raynaud
(b. 1939)
Psycho-Object, 3 Pots 3,
1964
Painted particleboard
panel, black-and-white
photography, Plexiglas,
shelf of painted wood,
three pots of flowers,
lacquered metal plaque,
72 7/8 x 48 3/4 x 9 1/4 in.
(185 x 124 x 23.5 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou

9.96

Christian Boltanski
(b. 1944)

The Beach at Berck,
1972

Sixty-one framed black-
and-white photographs,
c. 60 x 60 in.
(150 x 150 cm)
Musée de Grenoble



9.97

Annette Messenger
(b. 1943)

My Vows, 1988

Group of 262 black-
and-white photographs
set under glass and
hung from the wall with
string, 140 x 78 in.
(356 x 198 cm)
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou



Dubuffet's work was firmly anchored in an urban, and sometimes explicitly Parisian, setting, as in the Paris Circus series of 1961–62 (FIG. 9.98). His sculptural spaces to “visit,” like *Le Jardin d'Hiver* (Winter garden; 1968–70, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou), were quite distinct from the Habitation series—outside Paris—created by the sculptor Etienne-Martin beginning in the mid-1950s. Etienne-Martin's more recent constructions are self-contained, compact forms like *Mur-miroir* (*Habitation 15*) (Wall-mirror, 1979; Centre Georges Pompidou), made from a large section of a chestnut-tree trunk, cut

into more or less symmetrical halves, an arcane work which evokes the fantasy of the primitive grotto and generates a poetry of the elements or of the cosmos that is quite distinct from that of urban painters and sculptors. Art in Paris since the 1960s has continued to benefit from spaces favorable to the work of the imagination. In the spring of 2000 the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris inaugurated a new installation of its collections with Tania Mouraud's *Chambre de méditation*, a 1969 work reinterpreted by the artist for this presentation; according to the museum's curators, it gave the entrance to the collections an “initatory prologue.”

9.98

Jean Dubuffet
(1901–1985)

Business Prospers
from the Paris Circus
series, 1961

Oil on canvas,
65 x 86 1/8 in.

(165 x 220 cm)
The Museum of Modern
Art, New York; Mrs.
Simon Guggenheim
Fund



THE RENEWAL OF PUBLIC SPACE IN PARIS

In the “Place de l’Etoile” episode of the film *6 in Paris* (*Paris vu par...*; 1965), Eric Rohmer showed how the Arc de Triomphe exerted its appeal on tourists, while Parisians seemed to pay it no attention: the place de l’Etoile, where street lights are regulated based on the circulation of cars and not pedestrians, was reduced to a turnstile for the use of motorists. By contrast, in a more recent Rohmer film, *Les Rendez-vous de Paris* (1995), the action leads three young couples from the pedestrian place Igor-Stravinsky, enlivened by Jean Tinguely and Niki de Saint Phalle’s joyous fountain, to the Parc de la Villette and its colorful Folies by Bernard Tschumi and others.

The contrast between these two films reflects the renewal that has taken place in the Parisian public land-

scape in a generation. But this change has not followed a continuous evolution since the Liberation. There were intermittent projects in the 1950s, and the following decade saw the influence of kinetic art. Following François Mitterrand’s election in 1981, however, the Ministry of Culture, with the arrival of Jack Lang, was seized by an insatiable craving for original commissions. In the meantime, the cultural administration of the city of Paris had become one of the primary patrons of sculptors, and proponents of creating green spaces following the election of Jacques Chirac as mayor in 1977.

The modern forms and materials of sculpture were not favored by the successive administrations that approved public commissions following the war, however. For



9.99

Henry Moore
(1898–1986)

Reclining Figure, 1958

Roman travertine
marble
Garden of UNESCO
Headquarters

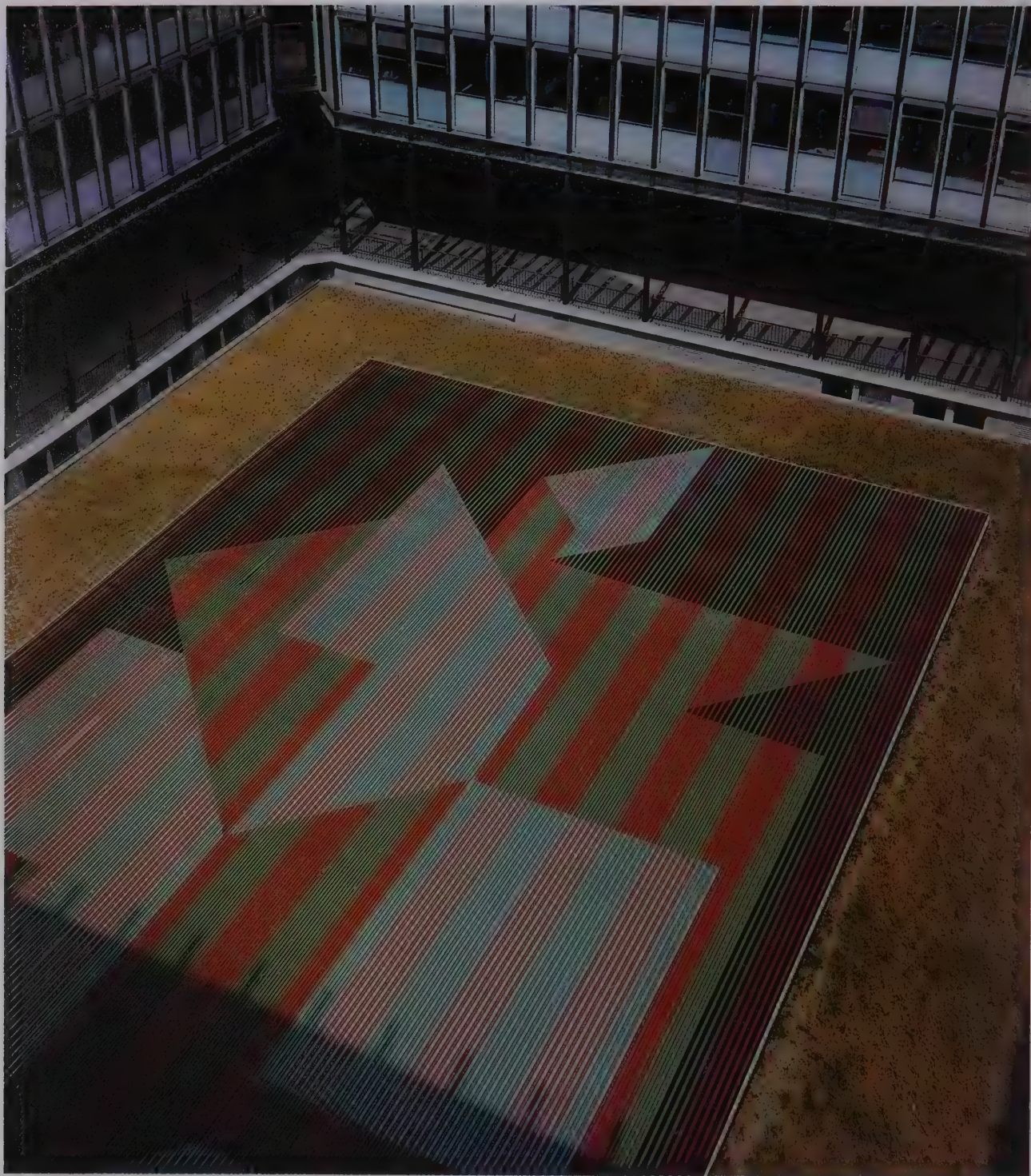
an effigy symbolizing France, where could one go? To a dead man, Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929), whose statue—in a too-small version—was inaugurated in 1948 on the quai de New York. The critic for *Le Monde* exclaimed, “Does France no longer have an artist capable of making her symbolic sculpture?”⁶² It seemed quite urgent to political leaders focused on memory and recovery to replace the bronze statues melted by the German occupiers. Practically all the public commissions of the immediate postwar period were initially devoted to this operation, at the lowest cost: stone was preferred to bronze. Generally, these effigies were placed on existing pedestals, so as to reestablish the previous state of ornamentation of public places. The mayor’s office solicited Robert Couturier, in particular, who had received his first commission in 1936 for a sculpture on the square of the Palais de Chaillot. He was asked to make his own version of the *Etienne Dolet*, which

had disappeared from the place Maubert. The plaster depicted a nude figure, four meters tall, closer to the paintings of Francis Gruber than to figures by Giacometti or Germaine Richier, to whose work his has often been compared. This slender form had a twofold *raison d’être*: it expressed dramatic tension in an impeccable geometric schema, and it related to the environment of tall, narrow buildings for which the statue was intended. But this representation would unleash a nationalistic rejection in a press quick to declare itself against any attempt at idealism since the affair of Rodin’s *Balzac* in 1898. The State acquired the work in 1946, the city of Paris refused it, and the model was placed in the storehouse of the Musée National d’Art Moderne.

These two episodes are representative of the problems posed by commemorative sculpture in public spaces, where the philosophical stakes are always high, when it is a matter of symbolic figuration. Consideration of a



9.100
Marta Pan (b. 1923)
Sculptures, 1967–68
Cast concrete
Esplanade of the Centre
Hospitalier Universitaire
Necker, rue de Vaugirard



9.101

Victor Vasarely (1906–1997)

Courtyard 23–32, 1970 (destroyed)

Lacquered aluminum

Interior court, Faculté des Sciences, Jussieu

new form of sculpture in public spaces in Paris was secondary until the 1960s, but as soon as the first major postwar building projects were realized, the problem of their “decoration” arose. At UNESCO, inaugurated in 1958, Paris was to have a *Stabile-mobile* by Alexander Calder and a *Figure au repos* by Henry Moore, who conceived a hollow mass, as if the stone surrounded empty space, an atemporal and enigmatic goddess defying the past and present before this building highly charged with meaning (FIG. 9.99).

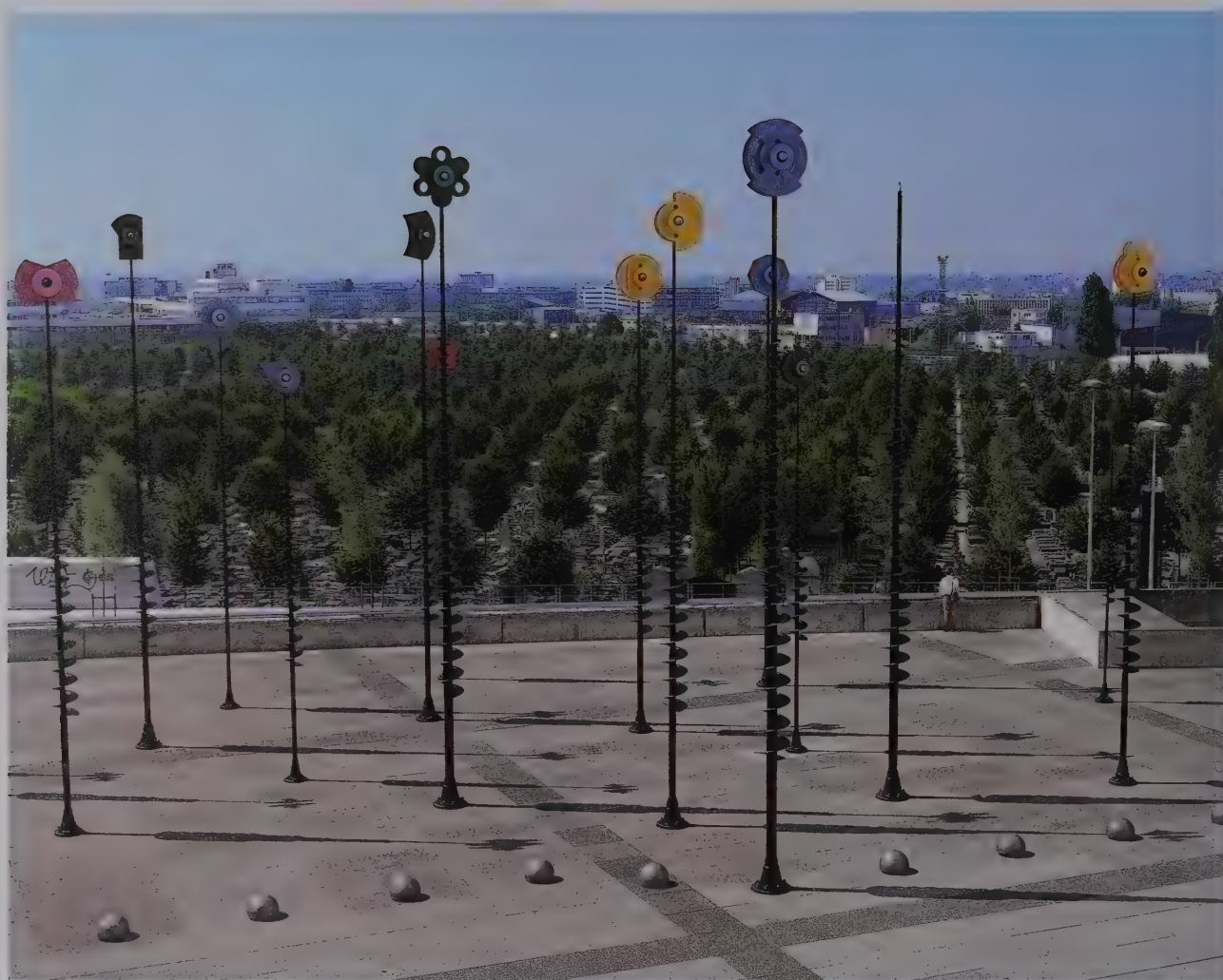
The British sculptor thus resolved the principal questions at the forefront of postwar monumental decoration throughout France. An initiative of the Popular Front in 1936, never put into effect, required that one percent of state support for the construction of a building intended for national education be allocated to an artistic work. Studied in 1947, the legislation on “the one-percent” at first resulted in a decree (November 15, 1950) that obliged the state to reserve this percentage of the cost of an educational building for its “decoration,” the artist being chosen, as a rule, by the architect. The Ministry of Culture was the first to imitate the Ministry of Education. The legislation was modified several times until 1969 in order to give an autonomous choice to regional commissions, in keeping with decentralization.

Aside from the inevitable mosaics and mural paintings, which were not particularly brilliant, the one-percent rule sometimes led to very original sculpture projects (close to half of the projects went to sculptors between 1960 and 1970). But these commissions were hardly plentiful in Paris itself. For one of the largest construction sites, the new Faculté des Sciences (1958–61, 1963–72) designed by Edouard Albert, André Malraux brought in François Stahly and Victor Vasarely, whose creations were installed in two interior courtyards in 1970 (FIG. 9.101). At the university hospital center Necker-Enfants-Malades, completed in 1967–68 by the architect André Wogenscky, it was his wife, the Hungarian sculptor Marta Pan, who was commissioned to make a wall of sculpted concrete as well as works of cast concrete placed on the esplanade (FIG. 9.100).

Other ministries besides Education and Culture instituted a one-percent fund for their constructions. But the public often mistakenly attributed a mythical “one percent” to a sculpture or decoration that in fact was commissioned under completely different circum-

stances by public administrations and private enterprises: indeed, the one-percent system, although frequently criticized for the aesthetic weakness of the results and the lack of coherence between a structure and its decor, has been rather popular and is generally accepted as a given. For many sculptors, it was long the sole source of commissions. Thus the notion of “public art” was developed in France in the 1970s based on recent experiences of accord or discord between architects, artists, city councillors, and the public. Paris remains, here again, a peculiar place. While city and state commissions were less audacious in the capital than in certain towns in the provinces, the accumulation of commissions, the creation of new neighborhoods, and above all the gradual occupation of all exterior spaces in Paris by permanent or temporary installations made it the most enviable urban site in France.

Whatever the silent partners and financial modalities of commissions, a “decorative” conception of monumental, outdoor sculpture still prevailed in the 1950s, at the expense of innovation. Finally, twelve years after the exhibition *Mouvement* at Galerie Denise René, which legitimized in the private market kinetic art after Calder and after Russian constructivism, the Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris mounted an exhibition of kinetic art, *Lumière et mouvement*, in 1967, thanks to the critic Frank Popper. One year later the Venezuelan Jesus Rafael Soto conceived a kinetic environment for the place Fürstenberg, which was then moved to the Parc Floral. In 1969, during his first personal retrospective in the capital, the same artist took over the square of the Palais de Tokyo with one of his ephemeral *Penetrables*; in this installation, visitors circulated between stems of metal as if moving through a forest. For the UNESCO extension, completed in 1969, a wall panel of Soto’s colored glass tubes occupied the entrance hall and extended outside like an awning. The same year, Carlos Cruz-Diez installed an ephemeral *Labyrinthe de chromosaturations pour un lieu public* (Labyrinth of chromosaturations for a public place) in Plexiglas and wood on the boulevard Saint-Germain. As Paris began to “lend” outside urban space to contemporary creations, the delay of institutions in making galleries available became more noticeable. Vassilakis Takis, whose work on modes of communication with natural and industrial means, such as wind and light, date from the



9.102
Vassilakis Takis (b. 1925)
Seventeen signals, 1990
Seventeen signal lights
installed at La Défense

9.103 (opposite)
Daniel Buren (b. 1938)
The Two Plateaus,
1985–86
Cour d'Honneur,
Palais-Royal

1960s, did not obtain a space for a significant installation until 1987, in the new neighborhood of La Défense, where he was initially commissioned to create an installation of his *Signaux lumineux* (Lighting signals) on the basin in 1987, then for his *Seventeen Signals* on the esplanade of the Grande Arche in 1990 (FIG. 9.102).

The 1960s, moreover, were ripe with initiatives stemming from artists themselves, whose interventions on public streets could be interrupted. Between 1961 and 1968 GRAV (Groupe de Recherche d'Art Visuel), in which François Morellet, Julio Le Parc, and Jean-Pierre Yvaral participated, issued a series of "proposals" intended to change the public's relationship with the work of art; labyrinths, in particular, came to the forefront as ideal forms for active participation. The ephemeral, mutable, and playful character of GRAV's installations, which could be seen at the third and fourth Paris Biennales

(1963 and 1965), corresponded to a philosophy of public art that broke with the most tenacious conventions. During the fourth Biennale, the artists of GRAV launched a tract comprising the map of Paris and the proposal for a "day in the street": "The life of big cities could be bombarded massively—not with bombs but with new situations soliciting a participation and a response from its inhabitants."⁶³ In relation to the creations of kinetic art, with which it was associated, GRAV brought a philosophy of instability and a taste for provocation that perfectly defined the spirit of the 1960s in Paris, outside of institutions.

Among the materials of the new urban art, stone remained widely used, but industrialization and the imitation of constructivist techniques brought other materials—smashed concrete, glass, stainless steel, Plexiglas, nylon—into the repertoire of urban sculpture



by the 1970s. Since the issue of a material's resistance to weather was no longer raised in the 1970s, a certain slackening of the previous decade's effort to place sculpture in the city was all the more evident: Marta Pan had to wait until the 1980s to install two new important works, a fountain at Belleville and another on the Champs-Élysées. This decade was not empty, however, far from it. Michel Guy, a Minister of Culture attentive to contemporary artistic life, made considerable innovations, such as having sculptures by Mark di Suvero, who had worked since 1970 in Châlons-sur-Marne, installed in the garden of the Tuileries in 1975. His tall monumental pieces, made of girders and pieces of steel cut with a blowtorch, welded, and bolted, artistically exploited methods of engineering in urban art.

Permanent or temporary, public sculpture after 1970 freed itself from the tradition of the pedestal, which no longer seemed indispensable, and from that of architectural decor, still very present on the large construction site of Chaillot in 1936 (see FIG. 8.33). But the most interesting challenge faced by new public sculpture in the 1980s remained linked to the question of architecture. Paris is a particularly difficult city to modernize, and the intrusion of projects that violated the traditional subordination of art to architecture provoked wild controversy. André Malraux had not been very bold in this domain, and Michel Guy proved more sensitive to the metamorphoses of contemporary aesthetics. Jack Lang, on the other hand, accumulated provocations with brio. In 1984 he commissioned Daniel Buren to create a system combining water and sculpture for the main courtyard of the Palais-Royal. For two years Buren, who headed the project with the assistance of the architect Patrick Bauchain and the hydraulic engineer François Braize, battled a public opinion polarized on both the political and aesthetic levels. Using his personal system of vertical bands linked to a horizontal network in the ground, Buren made a "plateau" of truncated columns, of various heights and of the same diameter as those supporting the galleries, with alternating vertical stripes $3\frac{1}{16}$ inches (8.7 cm) wide, made of Carrara marble and black marble from the Pyrenees. The water flowed on another "plateau" that one could see below ground, through grates, giving the work its title, *The Two Plateaus* (FIG. 9.103).

The confrontation between the eighteenth-century

columns forming the courtyard—irremovable architectural patrimony, expressing order and function—and a contemporary creation that seemingly denied these two patrimonial qualities, was most provocative; however, Buren's columns, which were inviting to play, rest, and stroll among, were adopted by the public. Nearby, between the two porticos of the Palais-Royal, Pol Bury's shimmering, moving balls (*Sphérades*, 1985), clearly identified as "modern" decorative sculpture, never caused a scandal. One might ask whether true respect for patrimony was more to be found in the new perspective Buren created in relation to the surroundings than in the gracious ornament of Bury, which could have been placed anywhere.

The controversy surrounding Buren's columns prevented the complete realization of the initial project. Several sculptors who were to participate in it found places outside Paris to install their work: this was the case for Anne and Patrick Poirier, whose *Birth of Pegasus*, an installation planned for the pond of the Palais-Royal, was welcomed in 1986 at the Fondation Cartier at Jouy-en-Josas. They were not the only sculptors whose work found more recognition outside Paris: not until the 1990s was a Demeure in bronze by Etienne-Martin installed in the park in Bercy, and Jean Amado remained absent from the large construction projects that transformed the landscape of Parisian parks.

Squares, Places, and Parks

The classic image of everyday Paris is the café. Added to this should be the square, a public park of small or average size, surrounded by a gate, sometimes planted amid dense urban traffic such as the place d'Italie, sometimes, on the contrary, tucked into a corner of a peaceful neighborhood, such as the new place Lucien-Herr (with a statue by Alejandro Otero and a wall fountain by Bernadette Gourrier). The development of green spaces was prodigious in the second half of the twentieth century, and there are today 129 square feet (12 square meters) of green space per inhabitant (versus 27 square feet [2.5 square meters] in Tokyo, for example, and nearly rivaling New York's 150 square feet [14 square meters]).

In the Parisian square, there are two or three sorts of ornament: the fountain, the statue, and sometimes a

nineteenth-century kiosk for outdoor concerts. The fountain in the square at the place de l'Estrapade, with its small pond, is a typical example of "pastiche" ornamentation, industrial in origin, its old-fashioned aspect as endearing as Jacques Prévert's "*bancs publics*," as sung by Georges Brassens. Also industrial productions, the fountains endowed by the collector and philanthropist Sir Richard Wallace in 1872 are regularly maintained (FIG. 9.104). There are around seventy-five, of three different types, scattered throughout Paris, most often in squares or intersections. In the shadow of the urban revolutions surrounding Gare Montparnasse, the garden that extends along avenue du Maine in front of the city hall of the fourteenth arrondissement constitutes a quaint and charming enclave, with one of these fountains at one end and a pétanque game at the other: a typical image of the contrasts of Paris, which preserves its rustic aspects amid the urban tumult.

The industrial caryatids of the Wallace fountains remain associated with a function: distributing drinkable water. The other water fountains in Paris can be divided into those that use water as a decorative element, whether in sculptures conceived for the planted environment of squares, gardens, and parks; or for the "mineral" space of intersections, traffic circles, and avenues. Since the construction boom in neighborhoods like La Défense and new parks like Bercy or La Villette, water has continued to be associated with architecture and sculpture projects. As in the case of Daniel Buren, sculptors must work with hydraulic technicians, and the maintenance of the engineer's system is as vital as the preservation of the sculptural works themselves. It is no longer a matter, as it was between the two world wars, of building brilliant and ephemeral fountains, as for a world's fair, but of dotting the full gamut of public space with permanently installed fountains. Equipped with a system for recycling water, contemporary sculpted fountains are rather economical; only neglect or lack of a suitable budget can explain why some have gone dry and the basins have become clogged.

Of the new traffic circles designed during the recent urban upheavals, the most spectacular is without a doubt the place de Catalogne, around which traffic is organized between the place Denfert-Rochereau, the Montparnasse neighborhood entirely rebuilt since the 1960s, and the fifteenth arrondissement, reconstructed

in the 1980s. The place de Catalogne is interesting in that it was designed by the Spanish architect Ricardo Bofill as part of a program of social housing. The housing is built in a postmodern style that marked a radical break with the first developments in the Gare Montparnasse neighborhood, which saw the erection of the Tour Montparnasse, an aesthetic catastrophe to which Parisians have resigned themselves. In 1988, at the center of the place de Catalogne, conceived for a large influx of cars, the sculptor Shamaï Haber created the paradoxical *Creuset du temps* (Crucible of time), a sort of circular slab, serving as a central basin, using 300,000 paving stones of smooth, polished granite; water glides like a mirror to edges made of large, rough paving stone, where it flows in small cascades. There is no concession to "prettiness," or to "nature," but a pure mineral manifesto. Why, in effect, the builders seemed to say, adorn an area totally inaccessible to the pedestrian with a lawn or a delicate arrangement of flowers? In this minimalist conception, very rare in Paris, the concave volume on the ground responds to the convex form of Bofill's buildings.



9.104

Place Bernard Halpern with one of the fountains donated by Sir Richard Wallace, c. 1870



Unlike the place de Catalogne, the place Igor-Stravinsky, between the Saint-Merri church and the Centre Georges Pompidou, is surrounded by an odd assortment of facades. The underground presence of the rooms and physical plant of the Institut de Recherche et de Coordination Acoustique Musique (IRCAM) made the fountain commission awarded to Jean Tinguely and Niki de Saint Phalle technically delicate, since it had to support several tons of water (FIG. 9.105). Tinguely had to respond to the challenge of reducing the weight of the works as much as possible, and Saint Phalle, in sculptures such as *L'Oiseau de feu* (Firebird), named in homage to Stravinsky, used only colored polyester resins with fiberglass (FIG. 9.106). Tinguely used scrap iron, painted black as all his works are, like the bottom of the basin itself (FIG. 9.107). Only some of the sculptures spout water, and not all of them turn at the same speed or in the same direction. The incontestable success of this ensemble has as much to do with its charm and sense of fantasy as with its unhurried perpetual motion. The site encourages strolling, lounging, and meeting, like Buren's *Deux Plateaux*, or, over greater distance, Tschumi's *Folies*, discussed below.

In 1961 the Conseil de Paris asked the Parks and Gardens Department to create an attractive area of greenery at the edges of the Bois de Vincennes, following the success of the first two international flower shows. It was decided that the third flower show would take place in the east of Paris, created entirely from scratch on ground once used by the military. In the Parc Floral de Paris, inaugurated in 1969, landscape architect Daniel Collin took advantage of differences in height to diversify the spaces; 100,000 species, for example, were planted in the "valley of flowers," and at the edges of an artificial lake, in the midst of trees, surged a cascade whose water fell on elements of the *Monumental Fountain* commissioned from François Stahly (1969) under the one-percent allocation (FIG. 9.108). The idea arose to make the new park a museum of outdoor sculpture, as France did not have one yet. The project was initiated with the state's assignment of sculptures to the site beginning in 1971, including Yaacov Agam's *Lignes-Volume* (1969–71), a transformable sculpture made of stainless steel, and Alicia Penalba's *Grand Dialogue* (1970), featuring two bronze elements. In 1974 Jean Amado's *La Mahone* (1973), of fired concrete, was commissioned, followed in 1994 by a rearrangement and

9.105 (opposite)
Jean Tinguely
(1925–1991) and
Niki de Saint Phalle
(1930–2002)
Stravinsky Fountain,
1983
Place Igor Stravinsky



9.106 (far left)
Niki de Saint Phalle
(1930–2002)
Firebird, from the
Stravinsky Fountain,
1983
Colored polyester resins
with fiberglass, about
118 1/8 x 118 1/8 x 23 3/8 in.
(300 x 300 x 60 cm)
Place Igor Stravinsky

9.107 (left)
Jean Tinguely
(1925–1991)
The G Clef, from the
Stravinsky Fountain,
1983
Scrap iron, 98 3/8 x 59 in.
(250 x 150 cm)
Place Igor Stravinsky





new contributions from the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, such as Calder's *Cinq Ailes* (Five wings; 1967). The vicissitudes of this work testify to the pitfalls in an undertaking conceived with good intentions at the outset but never seriously followed through: commissioned by the state for the Jussieu project as part of the one-percent program, *Cinq Ailes* landed in the Parc Floral, took off again for an exhibition in Japan, and was never replaced. Of the first installations only a dozen works remain, among them François Stahly's waterfall, which is truly appropriate to the site.

In the late 1960s Stahly, who had gone to the United States to make monumental sculptures, was probably the only living sculptor in France, besides Calder and the kineticists, to have a sense of the monumental. Appropriateness to the function of the site—whether architectural or natural—was still a challenge for modernism, in terms of forms and materials. Works of a highly personal nature, such as those of Dubuffet or Etienne-Martin, microcosms in themselves, took a while to be accepted by the Parisian cultural administration

and by a public with somewhat traditional preferences, which had to be overcome for it to accept something “more than modern,” at least for permanent installation. Among the sculptors and architects who, without shocking the Parisians, proposed creations adapted to a dual environment, both architectural and parklike, were Gérard Singer at Bercy and Bernard Tschumi at La Villette. In both cases, entirely new parks were created, but they were associated with large-scale architectural projects, in locations with histories that were particularly significant for Parisians.

At Bercy, a neighborhood of wine merchants gave way to 33 acres (13.5 hectares) of green space, created by the architects Marylène Ferrand and Bernard Huet and the landscape architect Philippe Raguin over ten years (1987–97). Parallel to the Seine, the park is included within a development area comprising 124 acres (50 hectares) of housing, offices, and business centers, aligned with the eastern side of the Palais Omnisports de Paris-Bercy (POPB), over which towers the silhouette of the new Ministry of Finances. The paving stones of

9.109

Gérard Singer (b. 1929)

Canyoneaustrate

Wall fountain in the garden of the Palais Omnisports de Bercy, 1987

Tinted concrete,
131 ft. 2¾ in. x
16 ft. 4⅞ in.
(400 x 5 m)

9.108 (opposite)

Daniel Collin,
landscape architect,
and François Stahly
(b. 1911),
fountain designer

Monumental Fountain

Black granite
Parc Floral, Vincennes,
1969



9.110
Bernard Tschumi
(b. 1944)
Parc de la Villette
Follies, 1983

the former allées and the stones of the former Saint-Germain market, which had been preserved and stored, were reused in the park, and the layout of the streets of the wine quarter served to give the park a geometric structure. Similarly, rails for conveying barrels and the ruins of an eighteenth-century château were left in place to give a rhythm to the new green space without erasing the urban past.

On the eastern square of the POPB, whose garden constitutes a sort of antechamber to the park itself, Gérard Singer completed in 1988 a kind of hybrid sculpture that served as a fountain. Subtle and very simple in appearance, this work is one of the most original monumental works of late-twentieth-century Paris (FIG. 9.109). The concrete was first poured into a polystyrene mold that had been shaped by flame, a process controlled by the artist, then tinted the color of Paris stone. Layers of different heights and curves contrast with the massive character of the architectural environment. A basin holds

a sheet of water in which the Palais Omnisports, designed by architects Michel Andrault and Pierre Parat, is reflected; the water of this small lake flows in a cascade into a narrow canyon, hence the work's complicated name: *Canyoneaustrate* ("Canyonwaterlayer").

At La Villette, the old slaughterhouses ordered by Baron Haussmann and demolished in the 1960s are evoked by the Grande Halle, or "Janvier building," the only building remaining of the ensemble constructed by the architect of the same name between 1863 and 1867. A hundred and thirty-six acres (55 hectares) were freed in order to make a large cultural complex, dedicated primarily to music, while the 74 acres (30 hectares) in the northeast were converted into a park. A plan for a "French-style" garden by the architect Adrien Fainsilber appealed to President Giscard d'Estaing, an heir of "national taste" and the initiator of the project. But in 1983 François Mitterrand called on Bernard Tschumi (prizewinner of the second phase of the competition,



held in 1982) to revise the form and concept completely. Construction was completed in 1993.

At La Villette, the largest park in the capital after the Tuileries, the landscape architect was key to the conversion of the space. One of Tschumi's ideas was to erect modernist "follies" along the circuits of the promenade, like points on a drawing of criss-crossing lines and surfaces: "Arranged regularly, implacably, at the intersections of a theoretical grid of 400 feet (120 meters), they are the bright red signals of the park: they mark its cohesion and dispersion."⁶⁴ These constructions (FIG. 9.III) are basically cubes of 33 feet (10 meters) on a side, or, as the architect puts it, "three-story constructions of neutral space," placed at 400-foot intervals, which are intended to provide, through repetition, a recognizable identity for the park. They are made of industrial elements—girders, pieces of cranes, etc.—like surreal and monumental successors to the assemblages of the Dadaists and Constructivists. With each Folie is associated a "house" made

by a different architect, from Henri Gaudin to Gaetano Pesce, and devoted to a theme: gardening, computers, and so on, and Philippe Starck contributed with his design for a Villette Chair in a straight zig-zag shape. Rarely has the mixing of genres and experimentation been elevated to such real grandeur. Here we are in the realm of a totally controlled utopia, a sort of ideal union of art, philosophy, and an engineer's calculations.

Experimental Pathways

The appropriation of Parisian space by artists was never so intense as in the 1980s and 1990s. Starting around 1975, the city, in upheaval as a result of large-scale demolition and the creation of new neighborhoods and large buildings, had become rather difficult to bear—noisy, dirty, and disfigured in the eyes of longtime inhabitants. A few artists who represented the international avant-

9.III

Adrien Fainsilber
(b. 1932)

Geode, Cité des Sciences
et de l'Industrie, 1986
Parc de la Villette



9.112

Christo (b. 1935) and
Jeanne-Claude (b. 1935)
*Wall of Oil Barrels—Iron
Curtain*, rue Visconti,
Paris, 1962

240 barrels, 14 ft. 1 in. x
12 ft. 5 in. x 5 ft. 6 in.
(4.3 x 3.8 x 1.7 m)

garde nevertheless re-created unexpected points of passage, trajectories, and pathways. With the completion of the building projects around 1995, the new Paris became more “readable,” more practical, and, quite simply, more beautiful.

The Pont Neuf, the oldest bridge in Paris in spite of its name, was abundantly depicted in the twentieth century in photography and film. It was this bridge (so emblematic for Parisians) that Christo and Jeanne-Claude chose to be the object of a “wrapping” in 1974. Ten years of preparatory work preceded the definitive presentation in 1985 (see gatefold, pp. 1398–1400). *The Pont Neuf Wrapped*—swathed in 431,000 square feet (40,000 square meters) of canvas and 140,000 square feet (13,000 square meters) of cord unrolled by mountain climbers, is nothing but a magical memory today, maintained thanks to the photographs of Wolfgang Volz, the photographer of projects by Christo and Jeanne-Claude. The wrapping of historical buildings by Christo and Jeanne-Claude has sometimes been interpreted as a paradoxical metaphor for the erasure of architecture. Other interpretations might be suggested, especially in

the case of the Pont Neuf. The expression “Parisian artistic scene” could be taken in its true sense: all of Paris becoming an ensemble of theatrical settings, provisional and transformable scenery. Moreover, in the context of the renovation of the capital, which started with the bleaching of façades under the ministry of Malraux, all Parisian edifices were likely to be masked at some point by scaffoldings and tarpaulins. Now, under the artists’ elegant draperies, nothing was anticipated; the architecture remained intact and the sculpture was made of fabric; one could “visit” the bridge and note the profoundly strange feeling of textile where one’s foot usually encountered the hardness of stone.

Christo and Jeanne-Claude, who lived in the French capital from 1958 to 1964, had installed their second site-specific work, *Wall of Oil Barrels—Iron Curtain*, in 1962, a temporary wall made of 240 oil barrels, which blocked the small rue Visconti and was dismantled by order of the police: the work made explicit reference to the barricades during the Algerian War (FIG. 9.112). While the political aspect of most of Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s works has become muted, it is nevertheless certain that the tumultuous and insolent Paris of the 1960s never disappeared from the memory of the artists and intellectuals who experienced it. The context of the 1980s and 1990s seemed favorable to a complicit or pragmatic acceptance of the artistic event, since even in Germany, where the wrapping of the Reichstag in 1995 was preceded by fierce political debate, its realization elicited mainly amused reactions or technical and financial questions. The apparent aesthetic “gratuitousness” began to seem out of keeping with the considerable sum required by Christo and Jeanne-Claude to assemble the necessary materials and pay the technical teams.

The specific effect of Christo’s projects relies on a very powerful visual shock, focused and short-term: *The Pont Neuf Wrapped* drew three million people. By contrast, a permanent installation in Paris went almost unnoticed: Jan Dibbets’s *Homage to Arago*, inaugurated in December 1994, composed of 135 medallions, each twelve-and-a-half centimeters in diameter, marked with the name of François Arago (1786–1853), director of the Observatoire de Paris and a leftist deputy from 1830 to 1848. From 1893 to 1942 a bronze statue of Arago had stood in the little place de l’île de Seine, where the

meridian of Paris passes through the boulevard Arago. As with so many other statues in Paris, it was melted down during the war; nothing remained but the pedestal. To honor Arago, Dibbets conceived, in his words, an “imaginary monument realized along an imaginary line, the meridian of Paris.” Extending along this line in both directions from the empty pedestal he installed the medallions. Dibbets’s installation, his response to the question “how to make a monument at the end of the twentieth century,” remains in the ground of Paris like a confidential message in homage to a great scholar. It also refers to another aspect of Parisian history: during the creation of the two gardens on avenue de l’Observatoire, from 1867 to 1874, there was a plan to arrange the garden’s sculptures following a straight line from the Observatoire, whose pavement was divided in half by a copper band symbolizing the famous meridian, up to the gates of the Jardin du Luxembourg.⁶⁵ The idea of creating a path in connection with an artwork or works is thus not new in French art, but Baron Haussmann’s right angles have yielded to less rigid networks—and statues on pedestals to other forms of creation.

Such “pathway” installations are at times temporary, corresponding to the duration of an exhibition. Some require the participation of the public, as when François Arnal paid homage to the politician who decreed the abolition of slavery in France’s colonies on the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of that event in 1998, at the Panthéon, where the visitor was invited to place a pebble on Victor Schoelcher’s tomb. Others require more active looking on the part of the spectator in modifying a building, as when François Morellet crisscrossed the monumental staircase of the Centre National d’Art Contemporain (rue Berryer) with black adhesive tape: here the architecture (a townhouse from the late nineteenth century) was treated as a support, whose accidents of texture and volume visually disturbed the orthogonal geometry of the applied network. Morellet’s *Climbing Neon*, installed in the garden of the Musée Zadkine, offered another kind of intervention, as he entwined green neon in a tree (FIG. 9.113), introducing the snake of commercial lighting into the Eden of a designed “natural” environment. This close relationship with built surfaces or designed environments is probably the ultimate stage an artist can attain in the disintegration of genres.

Whatever forms the appropriation of public Parisian space has taken, it has deeply affected passersby, whose gaze and curiosity are constantly solicited. It also modifies the question of “perspectives” within Paris, which is gradually becoming a city like Tokyo, deprived of a center but filled with signs. Not long ago, sculpture in France was misunderstood by French citizens, public officials, and publishers. As a consequence of half a century of modernism in Parisian public spaces, the reverse can now be said: the state and city have become obsessively interested in sculpture, and their interventions have increased since the 1989 bicentennial of the Revolution. Moreover, modernist experiments questioning the traditional notion of statuary and sculpture have often found a real application on the monumental or urban scale.

9.113

François Morellet
(b. 1926)

*Neon Climbing
According to the
Number 3.141161999*

Green neon in a
tree in the garden of the
Musée Zadkine,
December 10, 1999–
March 19, 2000



Postwar Fashion: The New Look and After

"Haute couture is an endangered masterwork."

CHRISTIAN LACROIX

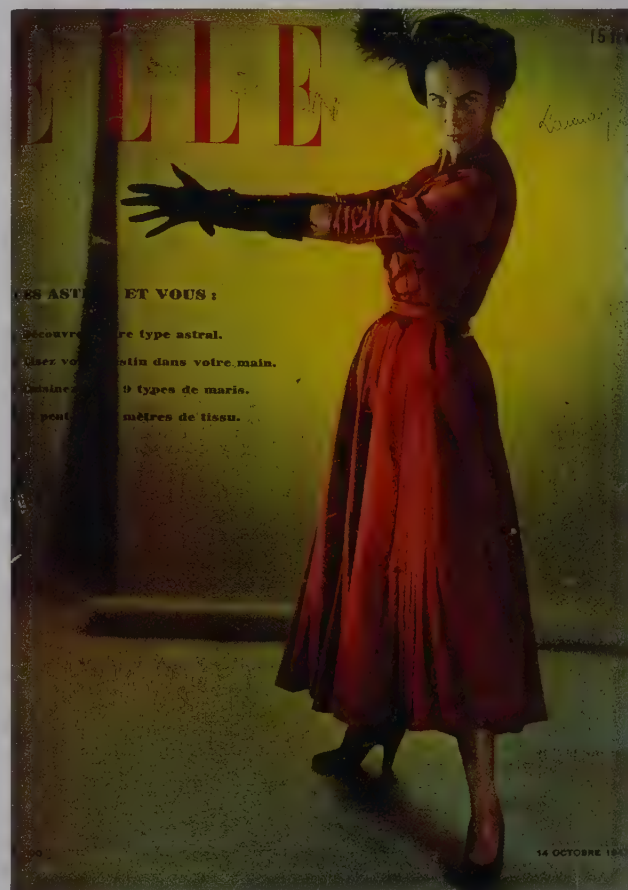
"The object kills the object."

PHILIPPE STARCK

Parisian supremacy in the realm of fashion survived the war, despite German intentions to move the fashion industry eastward, thanks in part to the diplomacy of the couturier Lucien Lelong, chairman of the Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne from 1936 to 1946. The Americans, too, tried to challenge Paris as a fashion center after the war, but only succeeded in providing a name for the style which put Parisian haute couture back on its feet: the "New Look" introduced by Christian Dior in 1947 (FIG. 9.114). His first collection, called "Corolle," which introduced a radically new feminine silhouette after the war's restrictions and years of military wear, delighted Carmel Snow, the influential editor of *Harper's Bazaar*. "Your dresses," she said to Dior, "have such a new look." A model wearing a Dior suit appeared on the cover of the French magazine *Elle* in spring 1947. Convinced, like Pierre Balmain and Jacques Fath, that the American market offered a great opportunity, Dior opened a shop in New York in 1948 and created special patterns for American women.

The origins of haute couture date back to the Parisian House of Worth in the late 1850s. But it was not before 1910 that the status of couturier was legally separated from that of clothes manufacturer ("confectionneur") and that couture was distinguished from "confection," that is, ready-to-wear manufacturing. In 1945 the term *haute couture* became a designation protected by law; only companies mentioned on a list drawn up each year by a commission of the Chambre Syndicale are entitled to use it. The criteria, updated in 1992, prescribe a minimum of twenty workshop staff and that the house present to the press in Paris each season (spring–summer and fall–winter) a model collection for both daytime and evening wear, consisting of at least fifty original designs. The number of couture houses fell dramatically in the decades after the war, from 106 in 1946, to nineteen in 1967. That number remained fairly steady until 1992,

when the more demanding new criteria and ballooning expenses of maintaining such an establishment helped contribute to a further decline in the number of listed haute couture houses from twenty-one in 1992 to twelve in 2000. The creation of made-to-order designs for an ever-dwindling wealthy clientele (some 15,000 in 1947, perhaps 1,500 today) was gradually supplanted by marketing of high-profile fashion brands. *Elle* featured ready-to-wear dresses as early as 1952, with Brigitte Bardot as a model.



9.114

Cover of *Elle* magazine showing Christian Dior's New Look, October 1947



Christian Dior, who had gone to work for Lucien Lelong in 1942, started his own fashion house in 1946, with the backing of the industrialist and textile manufacturer Marcel Boussac. From 1947 until his death in 1957, Dior introduced several lines, named “A” or “H,” according to the silhouette, and always tight around the waist. He invented the cocktail dress, a new genre adopted by Jacques Fath and others, and his suits set a standard of elegance (FIG. 9.115). One might recall the famous black and white *pied de poule* suit which Ingrid Bergman wears in the 1961 *Goodbye Again* (*Aimez-vous Brahms*), directed by Anatole Litvak. The same year, in *Last Year at Marienbad*, a film by Alain Resnais, the actress Delphine Seyrig wears a dress made in a beautiful gold *lamé*, which was to be copied many

times, becoming a staple of French easy “chic”: it was created by Coco Chanel, who was once again in competition with her male colleagues in 1954, the year Schiaparelli’s house closed. Generally this year is also considered as the limit of the New Look era, after the “flou” style reappeared in 1952 and Chanel offered a line of looser coats. However, the crucial innovation of Christian Dior was to introduce the licensing of accessories and cosmetics under the brand name Dior. Other couturiers followed, including Chanel in 1955 with her stuffed bag. The publicity campaign for the Dior perfumes, the first being “Miss Dior” in 1948, was entrusted to René Gruau who designed a number of original color posters, in white, red, and black. At the same time, Chanel’s perfume “Number 5,” created in the early 1920s,

9.115

Christian Dior
(1905–1957)

Gray flannel “A” suit

began a worldwide career. Industry, marketing, and fashion were to work together intensively from this point on.

The international success of Parisian fashion in the 1950s was, appropriately, embodied by an American-born Dutch-British actress in a Hollywood film by a director born in Austria, Billy Wilder's 1954 *Sabrina*, starring Audrey Hepburn dressed by Hubert de Givenchy.



9.116
Hubert de Givenchy (b. 1927)
Audrey Hepburn in *Sabrina*
(Billy Wilder, 1954) wearing
ball gown designed by Givenchy

Hollywood costumer Edith Head received the film's only Academy Award, for costume design, largely on the strength of the uncredited Givenchy's gorgeous ball gown (FIG. 9.116), but it was Givenchy who would go on to dress Hepburn in such films as *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961) and *Charade* (1963). Givenchy, who had opened his fashion house in 1952, had focused first on finely detailed separates and high-style coats, as well as elegant gowns such as those Hepburn saw when she first visited his shop.

In 1955 Christian Dior hired Yves Saint Laurent as his assistant, and when Dior died two years later, the talented twenty-one-year-old succeeded him as master of the House of Dior. Saint Laurent opened his own fashion house in 1962, backed by Pierre Bergé, and the initials "YSL" invaded the market, a symbol of success and longevity in haute couture. In the early 1960s, however, an English fashion—antifashion would be a better word—born on the street and in London night clubs, created a sensation, going much farther in liberating the body than previous fashions. Nothing would ever be the same again, as the new youth culture asserted itself. Vivienne Westwood translated the pop phenomenon of the Beatles in her creations, and Mary Quant had a tremendous success among young women with the miniskirt. Haute couture was swept to the margins of fashion. Valerie Steele has explained that Parisian designers of the 1960s, like Pierre Cardin and André Courrèges, lacking a youth culture as inspiration, turned to futurism (FIG. 9.117).⁶⁶ Nevertheless, Courrèges, who worked for Balenciaga, opened his own house in 1961 with a ready-to-wear department called "Couture Future," and contributed to a true reform in the Parisian look. Predominantly white, instead of the black dear to Dior, his short dresses or skirts, with a "cosmonaut" touch provided by his trademark helmets and white boots, embraced the beauty of geometric design. His fashions corresponded with the success of geometric abstract art and the early excitement of the Space Age (Soviet cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin's first flight took place in 1961). Courrèges insisted on the essential qualities of his women's clothes: "short and constructed" ("court et structuré"). But this challenge was met by Saint Laurent, too, with his famous 1966 Mondrian collection (FIG. 9.118); which displayed the growing interest in geometric designs for clothing.

Yves Saint Laurent was the first couturier after World War II to collaborate on a stage production, making the costumes for Roland Petit's *Notre-Dame de Paris* in 1965; renewing the collaboration between the theater and haute-couture, which the Ballets Russes had initiated in Paris almost sixty years earlier. He and Bergé opened the first ready-to-wear boutique to be associated with a major couturier, Saint Laurent Rive Gauche, in 1966. Like Dior, he opened a door to mass merchandising that would help to preserve, while utterly transforming, haute couture. The opening of the Dior shop close to the church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, replacing the famous bookstore Le Divan, was the beginning of a flood of fashion stores in this *quartier*, identified for so long with Parisian and international intellectual life. At the same time, new shops for modernist furniture and design opened on the boulevard Saint-Germain and in the neighborhood, notably on the boulevard Raspail between the Seine and Montparnasse.



own collection, which extended beyond furniture. The Mobilier National came to play a role in the renewal of state commissions; the decorative arts museum would contribute to a renewal of Parisian design.

Modernist furniture and interior design had as much trouble gaining public awareness as official recognition. After the war, the housing crisis kept renters in old apartments. The new middle-class population that might have been interested in modern decor to furnish the undecorated, boxlike spaces of the new apartment

9.117
André Courrèges
(b. 1923)
Courrèges and
two models on
rue François I^{er},
1969

Design: Ensemble to Ambiance

In France in the 1960s, the term design started to be used to designate objects created in a series with industrial materials, based on a creator's prior drawing. After World War II, France had lagged behind countries such as Italy in this field, and Paris offered a rather blurred image of its interior design styles. A certain amount of audacity managed to coexist with sturdy traditions. The emphasis consumer society placed on the object per se made one forget the ensemble of which the object was to be an element, the ensemble being what the Salon des Arts Décoratifs knew so well how to present before the war. These days, it would be more pertinent to speak of an ambiance, in which furniture, objects, pedestals and windows, wall color and lighting, have a part. But the ensembles, whether private or produced for a public commission, did not remain in place for long. In Paris, official institutions like the Mobilier National (providing furnishings for state-owned buildings) and the Musée des Arts Décoratifs served as conservation depots for these vanished ensembles, these objects without a context: the former systematically restored furnishings produced on commission for the state and registered in its inventories; the latter managed and exhibited its



9.118
Yves Saint-Laurent
(b. 1936)
"Homage to Mondrian"
dress, from the
autumn–winter 1966
collection



9.119
 Pierre Soulages (b. 1919)
 Savonnerie tapestry
 for the Ministère de
 l'Economie et des
 Finances, Bercy
 Mobilier National, lent
 to the Ministry, 1989

buildings was more attracted by the Renault 4 CV at the Salon de l'Automobile and by the new little appliances at the Salon des Arts Ménagers. Whether in the kitchen or the bedroom, interior design fittings in Paris remained those of the prewar period: in 1945 a decor magazine criticized the “bric-a-brac” of “bourgeois slums.”⁶⁷ Regional furniture and “stylish” furniture from Galeries Barbès—or, still better, ensembles from the 1930s distributed by department stores before the war—held sway until at least the late 1950s. Finally, families living in tight quarters began to show interest in fold-away furniture with various functions (bed and chest of drawers, chest of drawers and desk). In the 1950s a modish sort of collapsible, adjustable furniture, made of lacquered steel tubes or painted wooden crates invaded living rooms. It was a sort of large-scale application of the experimental research of Pierre Jeanneret, Le Corbusier, and Charlotte Perriand in the period between the wars, when the company Flambo, which specialized in office furniture, had fabricated a few wall units in the Bib series, which the design trio adapted from their conception of an “inhabitable wall” (*mur habitable*). Tubes, plastics, and fabrics, at once supple and solid, experienced an astonishing vogue in large

department stores at the end of the decade, some the work of future “design stars” like Gae Aulenti and Pierre Paulin. Jean Prouvé’s work, done for educational organizations in particular, remained curiously in the shadows of postwar history, probably because his role as an architect and engineer was placed in the foreground.

In this context, the debate on tapestry appears somehow ambiguous, either out-of-date, or, on the contrary, quite pertinent. Jean Lurçat emerged as an original figure. His activity at the Aubusson workshops before World War II led to the hope for a true “revival of wall art” after the Liberation.⁶⁸ This revival took place in the provinces before it reached Paris, and it affected the wool craft industry before painting, ceramics, and mosaic. Under the occupation, Lurçat had convinced painters such as Marcel Gromaire to devote their energy to the creation of cartoons for tapestries woven at Aubusson, where the Mobilier National and the Gobelins and Beauvais workshops had relocated. Before the exhibition *La Tapisserie française du Moyen Age à nos jours* (French tapestry from the Middle Ages to the present) was held at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in 1946, several pieces from the Aubusson and Felletin workshops had been shown in towns in the provinces or in Paris on the

premises of the Compagnie des Arts Français, at the instigation of Jacques Adnet. This interior designer also hoped for a renewal of tapestry, which he conceived as total decor, in the spirit of French *bon goût*, the grand style. For Lurçat, on the other hand, wall covering had to enhance architectural effects and be visually striking, which he achieved with a technique, developed by François Tabard, for weaving thick wools; such material was intended for a setting that featured forward-looking architecture and furniture.

Wall art seen this way demanded a complete creative workshop, like that of the Bauhaus, something not found in Paris. However, state representatives in the provinces allowed a few walls to be adorned: tapestries by Lurçat furnished most of the education offices and prefectures. In Paris, Denise Majorel and Madeleine David, collaborating closely with the Association des Peintres Cartonniers de Tapisserie (Association of tapestry designers), founded in 1947, opened Galerie La Demeure in 1950 on the Right Bank (soon adding La Demeure Rive Gauche on rue Bonaparte), the goal being to distribute artists' tapestries to a larger public than the prewar patrons who had acquired the first creations by Lurçat and Le Corbusier. Le Corbusier had developed specific ideas about tapestry as he experimented with wool, in association with Jean Baudoin beginning in 1949. In 1952 he conceived of a very large tapestry, reaching to the floor and composed of pure colors, which he called *Muralnomad* because it had to follow the frequent moving of modern man. It was intended to bring a "poetic" warmth and acoustic comfort to rooms whose concrete walls it covered.

Nevertheless, Paris in this period was not the city where a revival of tapestry, a slow and painstaking art, could really come to the fore. The provinces, well equipped with workshops, played a greater role in this domain, as in the applied arts in general. Commissioned by Mobilier National in 1948, the first tapestry by Jean Cocteau, *Judith et Holopherne*, was woven at Aubusson; preserved in Menton, it reached Paris only through the film in which it appeared, *Le Testament d'Orphée* (1959). Lurçat's *Le Chant du monde* (Song of the world), an ensemble started in 1957 and conceived as a suite of very colorful tapestries, was presented at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs as soon as it was completed in 1964 but is kept in Angers. Lurçat's death in 1966 coincided

with the end of the first period of the renewal of wall art by workshops. A new generation soon attempted a transformation of tapestry across Europe, aiming to make it a vehicle for reshaping environments. As far as the official art of carpet and tapestry weaving was concerned, state commissions under the ministries of André Malraux and Jack Lang would give a second wind to the Savonnerie of the Mobilier National, and to the workshops of Beauvais (FIG. 9.II9).

The Modernist Interior

Around 1960, French production for the home appeared incredibly conformist in the eyes of a new generation, which was turning toward foreign contemporary design. Alongside Swedish chairs and sideboards made of pine or teak, work by foreign designers, like Harry Bertoia's metallic Diamond chair (1952), or Eero Saarinen's white Tulip chair (1956), prevailed over French creations. Ambiance had to do with white and color, orange tweed above all. A bed without box springs, on the floor, was a must for the young residents of the modern, "artistic" habitat, who flaunted their lack of interest in "reactionary" luxury objects. Sacco (1968), a pear-shaped easy chair—basically, a leather or synthetic fabric sack of polystyrene pellets—by the Italian design team Piero Gatti, Cesare Paolini, and Franco Teodoro, was emblematic for a generation.

The problem of modernist interiors in the 1960s was twofold: young designers had no means to make themselves known, and industrial materials were still associated in people's minds with low-quality furniture. In the late 1950s the company Meubles et Fonction was created in Paris by two young designers, Etienne Fermigier and Pierre Perigault, to distribute mass-produced contemporary furniture, at a time when furniture or design objects from the interwar period were just beginning to emerge from prototype status. Thus it was not until 1964 that the Italian firm Cassina acquired reproduction rights to chairs by Le Corbusier, Pierre Jeanneret, and Charlotte Perriand created between 1925 and 1929, the first of which were produced in 1965. Today, there is not a corporate lobby or ministry that does not have a Gran Confort chair. In 1948 the American company Knoll started making furniture



9.120
 Marc Chagall (1887–1985)
 Cupola for the Opéra
 Garnier, 1963–65
 Painted canvas on a
 plastic cupola
 Opéra Garnier

created twenty years earlier at Bauhaus by Mies van der Rohe. In France, by contrast, the distribution of furnishings made before 1940 was considerably slower. Cassina and Knoll had no equals in Paris until the late 1970s. In 1979 Andrée Putman and her house Ecart International reproduced Eileen Gray's famous Transat chair, created in 1925, and Robert Mallet-Stevens's tube chair, known through a few samples in 1930, which sold by

the thousands in reproduction.

This creative upsurge could not have happened without a radical change in policy in official institutions, whether educational or commissioning. Several initiatives were taken in Paris itself in the 1960s. In 1964 the Atelier de Recherche et de Création was integrated into the Mobilier National. Prototypes of furniture conceived for the state by young creators were perfected before



being produced by craftsmen or in a semi-industrial manner. Olivier Mourgue, Pierre Paulin, Roger Tallon, and many others benefited from this collaboration. Tallon, who had first drawn attention in the 1960s with his P111 Téléavia television set, would go on to make his mark especially in the industrial design arena, most prominently with the new double-decker Eurostar TGV, the high-speed long-distance train, and Paris's sleek new Météor metro, which carried its first passengers in 1998 (FIG. 9.123). Moreover, the Centre de Recherche Esthétique de l'Ameublement Contemporain (CREAC) took an active role between 1966 and 1978, while the Centre de Création Industrielle (CCI), created in 1969 within the Union des Arts Décoratifs, turned ideas into objects and educated visitors to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. The latter played a fundamental role through its exhibitions. The CCI would join the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1977.

Private initiatives for the commercialization of contemporary design in Paris did not really begin until the 1970s. With an intentionally Italian-sounding name,

Artelano (from "Arte" and "Milano"), Samuel Coriat started one of the first design production houses in 1974. The following year the agency AD produced about thirty products designed by Pierre Paulin. In September 1973 the first Habitat store opened below the Tour Montparnasse as the Englishman Terence Conran imported to France a style and sales method tried and tested across the Channel. There were no prescribed ensembles, but instead pieces of furniture and objects of varying quality that could harmonize with old furniture or provide the basics for a modern residence. In short, it was the response to standardized architecture: each person could create his or her own ambiance based on taste, needs, and budget. The same tabletop in black-tinted ash could be found in numerous offices and living rooms, adapted to a different setting and used for various functions. A sign of the recognition of a generation and a state of mind, Habitat furniture allowed one to forget the notion of an "ensemble," which Le Corbusier, for his part, had already stripped of its "decorative" origins. In a very Parisian paradox, it was the spirit of functional purism

9.121

Jean Bazaine
(1904–2001)

*Window with the
Baptism, 1966*

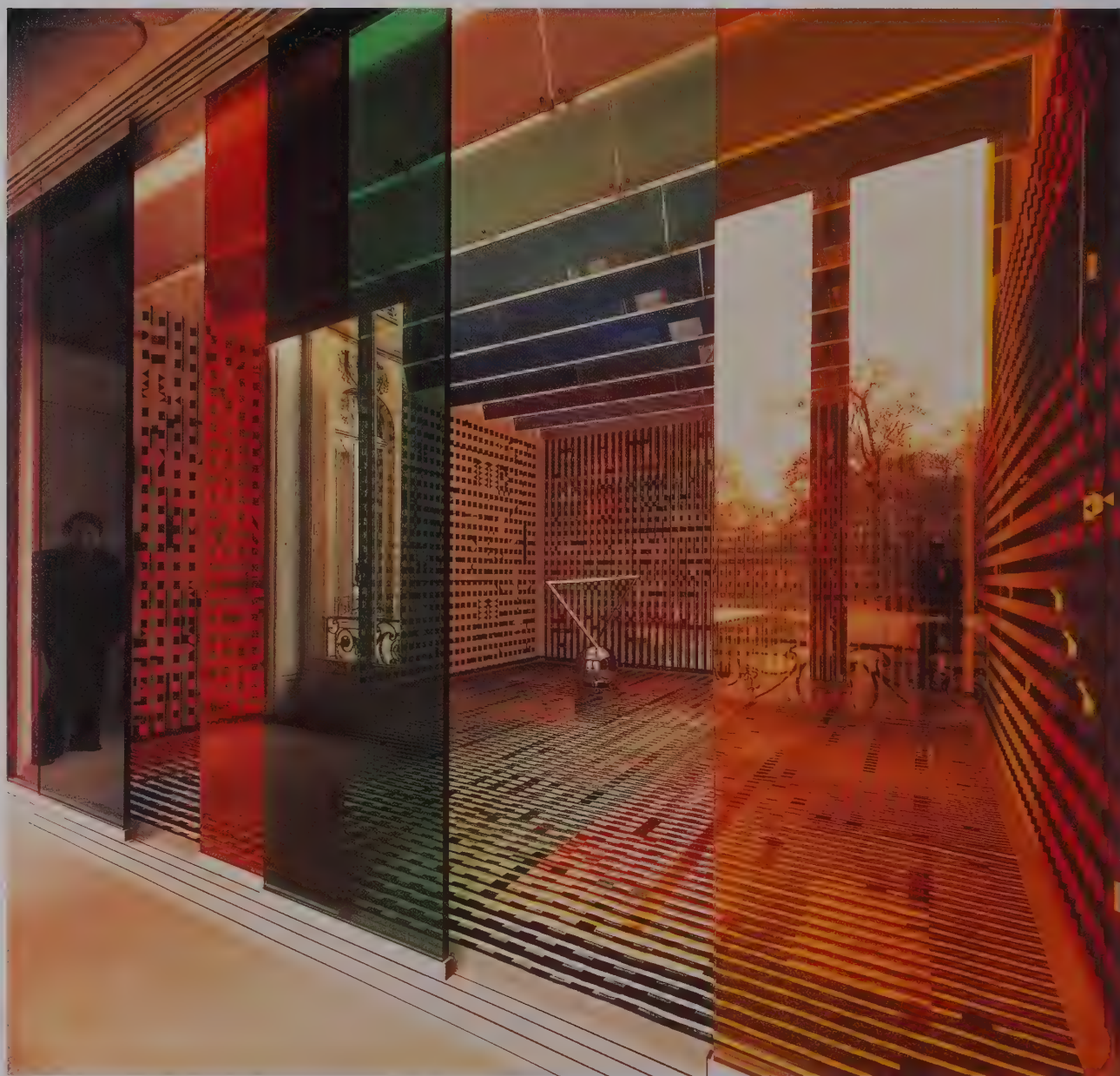
Stained glass
Choir, church of
Saint-Séverin

that now disappeared, in favor of the juxtaposition of semifunctional, semifolkloric elements.

Prior to this, the Prisunic chain, created in 1954, had developed its “Meubles Prisunic” sector by asking noted designers like Marc Held and Olivier Mourgue to make objects that were resolutely current. Andrée Putman first worked as a stylist at Prisunic, from 1958 to 1964. Twenty years later, in 1978, she opened her first boutique, Ecart. Aside from the reproductions mentioned above, one could find furniture, objects, and ensembles conceived by Putman herself or designed for

her furniture companies (Ecart International and Ecart Design) by young interior architects like Jean-François Bodin and Sylvain Dubuisson, whose talent would be recognized in the 1980s.

In the late 1970s the beginnings of a new lifestyle that would profoundly mark the field of design could be felt. It was also the beginning of the designer as celebrity. Philippe Starck emerged as the man of the hour: young and inventive, understanding his predecessors without copying them—although he himself recognizes ironically that some of his projects are true parodies of



9.122

Yaacov Agam (b. 1928)
Antechamber, private
apartments of the
President and Madame
Georges Pompidou,
Elysée Palace, partly
reassembled at the
Musée National d'Art
Moderne, Centre
Georges Pompidou,
1971

typical traditional products, like the Richard III “club” arm-chair. A sensible and “European” manager (he had his furniture produced in Italy), he became a model for young designers. Resolved to distribute at reasonable prices, he forced himself to counterbalance the “design collection” method of distribution that made Le Corbusier’s chairs inaccessible and greatly contributed to reconciling French buyers with design that also signified the definitive acceptance of living situations undergoing fundamental transformation. The years from 1980 to 2000 would see the all-out implementation of these tendencies, still barely asserted in the 1970s.

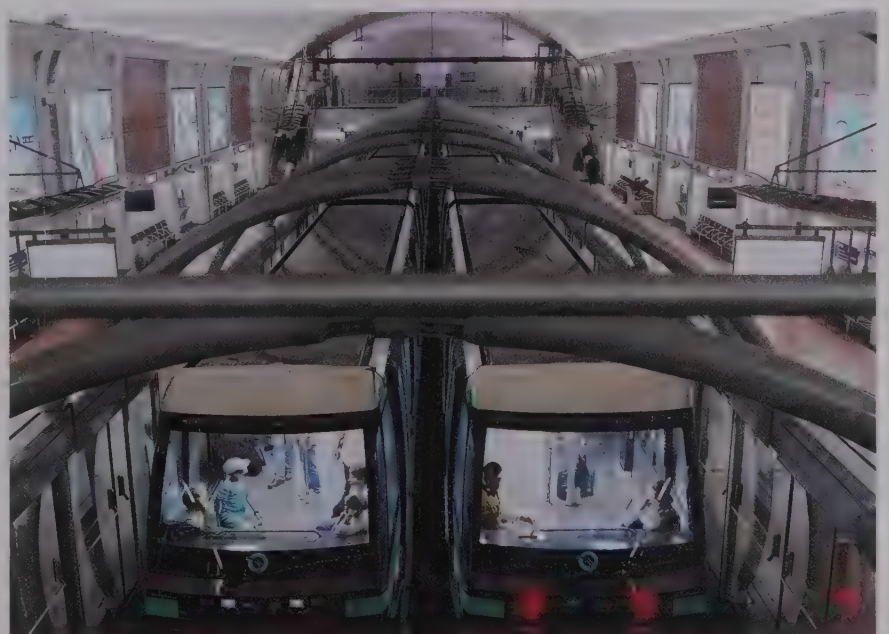
Meanwhile, official commissions had begun to play their role. By introducing contemporary creation in official settings, Georges Salles, the Director of French Museums from 1945 to 1957, and André Malraux, as Minister of Cultural Affairs, were the first to break with the tradition of using exclusively historical styles. Georges Pompidou, supported by his wife, very actively pursued this approach. The idea at first, quite naturally, was to renew the large mural decorations already in place. But the choices were prudent: the painters selected had a certain reputation. Georges Salles commissioned Georges Braque for new paintings on the ceiling of the Etruscan room in the Musée du Louvre in 1953. Three years later, Salles had to threaten to resign to prevent their being warehoused, as the secretary of state for fine arts planned. André Malraux’s proposals to entrust the new ceiling of the Opéra Garnier (FIG. 9.120) to Marc Chagall in 1963 and, two years later, that of the Odéon Théâtre de France to André Masson had a mixed reception: daring to some, iconoclastic to others, as those new ceilings obscured ones by Eugène Lenepveu and Jean-Paul Laurens, respectively. Sacred art had less luck: only in 1965–70, when the need to restore the choir windows in the church of Saint-Séverin became pressing, did the first modern stained-glass windows appear in Paris. Eight windows were entrusted to Jean Bazaine, who developed scenes from the New Testament in two color spectrums, pink and blue (FIG. 9.121). At the Musée du Louvre, the Chief Curator of Paintings, Michel Laclotte, wanted to furnish the galleries of the department of paintings in a contemporary way: cylindrical seats were commissioned from Pierre Paulin, created in the workshop of the Mobilier National, and installed in 1968. At the request of Georges Pompidou, who

benefited from the advice of Bernard Anthonioz, two great operations were undertaken at the Elysée Palace that were a departure from its formerly somber décor. The room leading to the private apartments was redone by Yaacov Agam in 1971. He conceived a total environment, brilliant, highly colored, and dynamic, in which the décor itself would reflect changes in the light during the day (FIG. 9.122). Visitors found it astonishing. The following year the administration of Mobilier National called on Paulin to redesign additional rooms, and to give them a complete *habillage*, conceived as an ensemble. Paulin deployed one of his most beautiful effects, a dropped ceiling in beige textile pierced with tiny stalactites of crystal, above the rounded forms of the furniture in the dining room (FIGS. 9.125–9.126).

Paulin collaborated with the Dutch firm Artifort from 1958 to 1975. One of the most original seating designers of the time, with the Ribbon chair and especially the famous Wave sofa created for the Osaka World’s Fair in 1970, he was also a pioneer in a city as difficult and contradictory as the Paris of the 1950s and 1960s, with competition from Jean Royère, Marc Held, and Olivier Mourgue. Because Paulin’s chairs are comfortable, he has been seen as the heir of bourgeois comfort. Yet his unconstrained modernism (his former Parisian apartment was typical, with a bed

9.123

Roger Tallon (b. 1929)
Météor Métro station
and subway car, 1995
Régie Autonome des
Transports Parisiens
(RATP)



9.124

Pierre Paulin (b. 1927)

F 582 Ribbon Chair,
1966

Tubular steel frame
with horizontal
springing, upholstered
with molded foam,
high-frequency pressed
wooden base, lacquered,
28 ⁵/₁₆ x 39 ¹/₁₆ x 15 ¹/₁₆ in.
(72 x 100 x 39 cm.)



on the floor and a large carpet on the terrace that curves into a seat with four corners) and his rejection of superfluous objects are in line with a Charlotte Perriand and anticipate Philippe Starck's remark twenty years later: "The object kills the object." The Paulin chairs fabricated by Artifort are covered in a colored jersey,

wrapping foam made of special latex—*gomma piuma*, produced by the Italian manufacturer Pirelli—placed on a base of stretched rubber. The Ribbon chair, conceived following this principle in 1965, was produced in 1966 (FIG. 9.124), while the stackable series of Tongue chairs, created in 1966, was produced in 1967. Curiously, these original and exceptionally pleasant chairs had to wait for the recognition of historians to gain acceptance in 1990s Paris. Was there a misunderstanding between Pierre Paulin and a potential public more drawn to metallic or plastic structures? Or did his work for Georges Pompidou cool interest in his furniture for political reasons? "This commission from the Elysée," he asserted, "really tripped me up: people on the left found me deviationist, people on the right found me too expensive, I did nothing more."⁶⁹ These bitter remarks were not quite in keeping with reality, since Paulin returned to his working methods and favorite material, wood, in 1980 at the Mobilier National, and François Mitterrand would entrust him with the renovation of his office at the Elysée, done in a completely new style.

9.125

Pierre Paulin (b. 1927)

Living room, private
apartments of the
President and Madame
Georges Pompidou,
Elysée Palace, 1971





9.126

Pierre Paulin (b. 1927)

Dining room, with view of ceiling,
private apartments of the President
and Madame Georges Pompidou,
Elysée Palace, 1971

Fashion: The Last "Battle of Paris"

In the world of fashion, even as Saint Laurent was canonized by a major exhibition at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1983, the still more venerable House of Chanel was about to be revitalized by Karl Lagerfeld, who became its artistic director in 1984. Lagerfeld had first worked for Pierre Balmain in the 1950s. During the 1980s, he redefined the classic Chanel suit. Instead of the "uniform" of the sixties, he created a youthful, lively silhouette with new patterns and light textiles, as well as a new line of sexy, thin, and flexible coats and trousers, introduced in 2001. An art collector, a media-savvy and extravagant figure, Lagerfeld as a personality has paradoxically made the remote, almost mythological figure of the fashion designer familiar to the French public.

The same might be said for Christian Lacroix, who began as the artistic director at Jean Patou's house in 1981. Lacroix opened his own fashion house in 1987 and was quickly recognized as a great figure in Parisian haute couture, a sort of new *seigneur* in a fairy-like world. Lacroix, who has a background in art history, employs styles of the past, which he reinvents with panache and high quality. He began to work in the fashion milieu at a time when black was again the universal color, and he introduced a palette of varied, brilliant colors, with red predominant. On stage, where the monochrome, pastel colors of Richard Peduzzi had a great success in the 1970s, the intensity of Lacroix's colors seemed quite new. The Théâtre Français asked him to design the costumes for *Phèdre*, staged by Anne Delbée in 1995 (FIG. 9.127). There, Lacroix accomplished a sort of operatic enchantment. The large, mirror-like surfaces designed by J.-P. Régnauld at the sides and on the ceiling reflected colored shapes, phantoms of the action. The costumes were gorgeous, red, yellow, and violet, with a tone put on the textures, emphasizing the contrast between flat and reflective fabrics. Lacroix's ready-to-wear pieces, including accessories, are marketed under the name "Bazar Lacroix" and sold in large stores such as Bon Marché.

In the 1990s, several of the most important houses were taken over by brilliant young British designers, John

Galliano at the house of Dior and Alexander McQueen at the house of Givenchy. As with Chanel and Givenchy decades earlier, the styles they developed were popularized on screen: Kate Winslet wears a suit by McQueen in *Titanic* (1997). The Japanese Kenzo, who had settled in Paris in the late 1960s (he ceased his design activity in 1999) was followed by the "big three": Issey Miyake, Yohji Yamamoto, and Rei Kawakubo (Comme des Garçons) in the 1970s and 1980s. They imported Japanese techniques of cutting and assembling large pieces of fabric, together with fanciful imaginations. They did a lot to change minds in the domains of marketing and showrooms, opening perfectly designed, white "high tech" shops. Miyake, who settled in Paris and entered the French Federation of Couture in 1973, introduced pleats in 1988, when his first exhibition was held at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. The Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain displayed his *Making Things* in 1998, an original concept which was initially presented in Japan; this show featured "clothes" cut in the newest technological textiles and presented as light, moving sculptures.

Currently, Jean-Paul Gaultier seems the only French couturier who is able to compete with Japanese trends on the same level, having created a style based on disassembled pieces and a play of transparencies, imposing various kinds of nets on the body. But Yves Saint Laurent remains the reference. Gaultier devoted to him the presentation of his collection in July 1998. On January 22, 2002, a retrospective show was organized at the Centre Georges Pompidou to celebrate his retirement in 2001, the recent renovation of the Pompidou having been largely financed by Saint Laurent's backer, Pierre Bergé. This event and many others recall Jean Dubuffet's equivocal remark, "There is not as much separating fashion and art as some might like to think." Without doubt, by the end of the twentieth century, Paris had reaffirmed its position as the world capital of fashion, a position still owed to the accumulated expertise of generations of skilled workers as well as to the indefinable ambiance that draws both an international clientele and the most gifted international designers to Paris.



9.127

Christian Lacroix

Costumes for Racine's
Phèdre, staged by
Anne Delbée, Comédie
Française-Théâtre
Français, 1995



ARCHITECTURAL VISIONS AND THE NEW CULTURAL AXES OF THE CAPITAL

"It is not at all inconsequential to me to have changed the color of Paris
and above all to have transformed a sad city into a gay city."

ANDRÉ MALRAUX

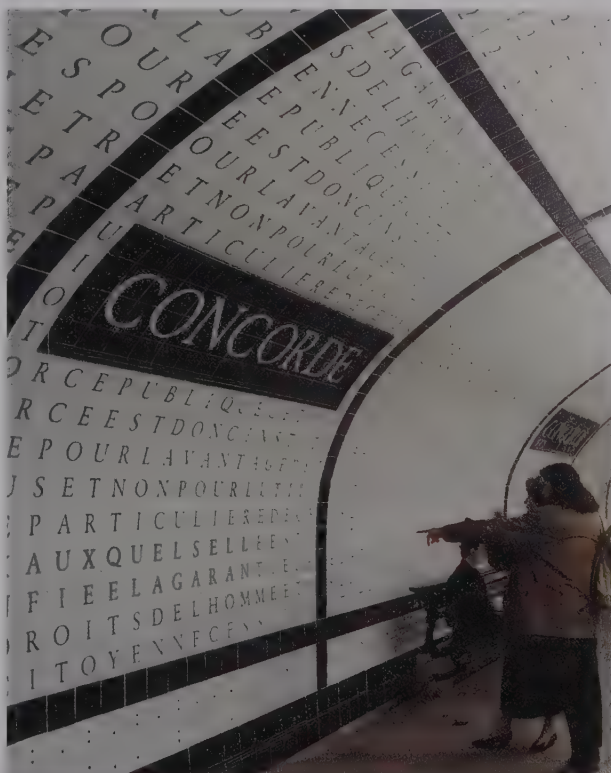
From Urban to Cultural Planning

The general transformation of "old Paris" did not begin until 1955 and was initially destructive. Entire blocks were razed to make space for concrete buildings. The value of preserving old buildings or blocks had been debated since the start of the century, but Paris had no coherent program of preservation. André Malraux's ministry, in 1962, focused on the restoration or "rehabilitation" of public monuments as well as old residences in certain neighborhoods such as the Marais. The Ministry of Culture's authority was generally limited to public commissions concerning edifices, restoration, conversions, and interior design. However, despite Malraux's legitimate pride in having "bleached" the façades of Paris, despite Jack Lang's talent for keeping current art visible, the real architectural decision makers were to be found behind the scenes, in infrastructure and planning. Moreover, property negotiation with the city of Paris required dogged persistence in the face of political uncertainties on the part of those in charge, such as François Barré, who faced countless difficulties in seeing through the construction of La Villette.

For some, urban planning in Paris after the war needed to be subordinated to the creation of new underground traffic routes. The issue was not only to modernize the Métro, but also to put in place new underground connections with the new cities of Ile-de-France. The creation of the Réseau Express Régional (RER), proposed in 1959, caused enormous problems. Moreover, the system was constantly evolving. A major axis, the line connecting the east and west of Paris, was the first to be planned and completed, between 1969 and 1977. One could now cross the city at 28 miles (45 kilometers) per hour, twice as fast as on the Métro. While construction of the RER resulted in demolition, drilling, and traffic jams in the capital for a generation, the stakes were vital. How to

modernize the Métro was, on the other hand, a perpetual question, made more urgent by the renovation initiated for the celebration of the bicentennial of the French Revolution. A number of stations were given a fresh look, thanks to artists' projects, like Françoise Schein's *Declaration of the Rights of Man* at the Chambre des Députés station (FIG. 9.129). Another big enterprise was to extend the lines, which led to the opening of the ultramodern Météor line in 1998; initially it connected the church of the Madeleine on the Right Bank to the new Bibliothèque Nationale on the Left. The design of the new train was by Roger Tallon (see FIG. 9.123).

9.128 (opposite)
I. M. Pei (b. 1917)
View of the Cour
Napoléon with
the Pyramid, Musée
du Louvre, 1993



9.129
Françoise Schein
(b. 1953)
*The Declaration of
the Rights of Man,
Concorde station of
the Métro, 1991*
44,000 silkscreened
ceramic tiles, each 5 7/8 x
5 7/8 in. (15 x 15 cm)
Comissioned by the
city of Paris to
commemorate the
Revolution of 1789

The Gradual Renewal of Public Architecture from 1945 to 1975

After the war, respect for Parisian patrimony was not a priority for administrators: Malraux's 1962 creation of "preservation sectors" turned out to be ineffective, and the battle for the modernization of Paris would constantly experience, under every administration, unending obstacles. Unending problems also plagued the commissioning of public buildings. In 1953, when a preliminary report on the construction of a new headquarters for UNESCO was requested from five experts (Le Corbusier among them), Paris was still an industrial city, which had its factory chimneys and deep atelier courtyards from the late nineteenth century. The architectural context in France was an odd mixture: on the one hand, modern architects such as Le Corbusier, Marcel Lods, André Lurçat, and Auguste Perret were asked to put all their energy into the reconstruction of disaster-stricken cities;

on the other, the traditional interests of local architecture, revived during the occupation, scarcely allowed innovation. Around Paris, the housing crisis and the need to construct mass housing rapidly in the suburbs gave rise to housing projects where standardization made a mockery of the sought-after social objectives.

It was in these circumstances that the first building of real consequence was realized in Paris after the war. Begun in 1953 and unveiled in 1958, the Palais de l'Unesco, at place Fontenoy (FIG. 9.130), gave Paris an international dimension. The beautiful Y-shaped plan of the building (Marcel Breuer, Pier Luigi Nervi, and Bernard Zehrufuss were the architects) immediately made its reputation; its three concave façades did not go above seven floors and were perfectly wedded to the architectural context of the site. The Italian Nervi designed large *pilotis* in white sandblasted concrete as well as a shell-shaped porch made of untreated concrete for the entrance facing avenue de Suffren. This

9.130

Marcel Breuer
(1902–1981),
Pierre Luigi Nervi
(1891–1979), and
Bernard Zehrufuss
(b. 1911)

Headquarters of
UNESCO (United
Nations Educational,
Scientific, and
Cultural Organization),
1958



“Janus-building,” as Le Corbusier called it, “salutes the past while opening itself to the future.” The design of standardized rows of floors would also be seen in residential buildings, or *barres*, built during the decade 1955 to 1965.

Completed the same year as Unesco was the Centre des Nouvelles Industries et Technologies, or CNIT (FIG. 9.131) at La Défense. It is to Jean de Mailly and the audacious engineer Nicolas Esquilan that we owe the conception of the famous concrete double shell, spanning 220 meters between supports, resting on three abutments. The project was overseen by three architects who had won the Prix de Rome: Mailly, Robert Camelot, and Zehruss. The skillful engineer Jean Prouvé led the team that designed the three immense glass facades, which are structurally independent of the vault so that they may “breathe” in response to changes in humidity. The creation of the CNIT was part of the plan to transform “old Paris” into a capital capable of rivaling the

most advanced countries by devoting an exhibition space to industrial and technological innovations. But the issue was also to create a viable financial district in the west of the capital. The idea of extending the axis that passes from the Louvre through the Tuileries Gardens and beyond went as far back as the reign of Louis XIV and Le Nôtre, who had laid out the royal road that terminated at La Défense, and already in 1931 the plan to link Porte Maillot and the traffic circle of La Défense had been the object of a competition. The new plan came from André Prothis, director of national and regional development, who in 1958 created the Etablissement Public pour l’Aménagement de La Défense (Public establishment for the development of La Défense). This was the first case in France where a government-owned corporation became a property developer.

The choice of the outlying neighborhood of La Défense, situated not in Paris but in the communes of Hauts-de-Seine, Puteaux, and Courbevoie, was the



9.131
Bernard Zehruss
(b. 1911) with Robert
Camelot (1903–1992)
and Jean de Mailly
(1911–1975)
Centre des Nouvelles
Industries et
Technologies (CNIT),
La Défense, 1958



9.132

Henry Bernard
(1912–1995), in
collaboration with
Jacques Lhuillier,
Niermans Frères,
and Sibelle

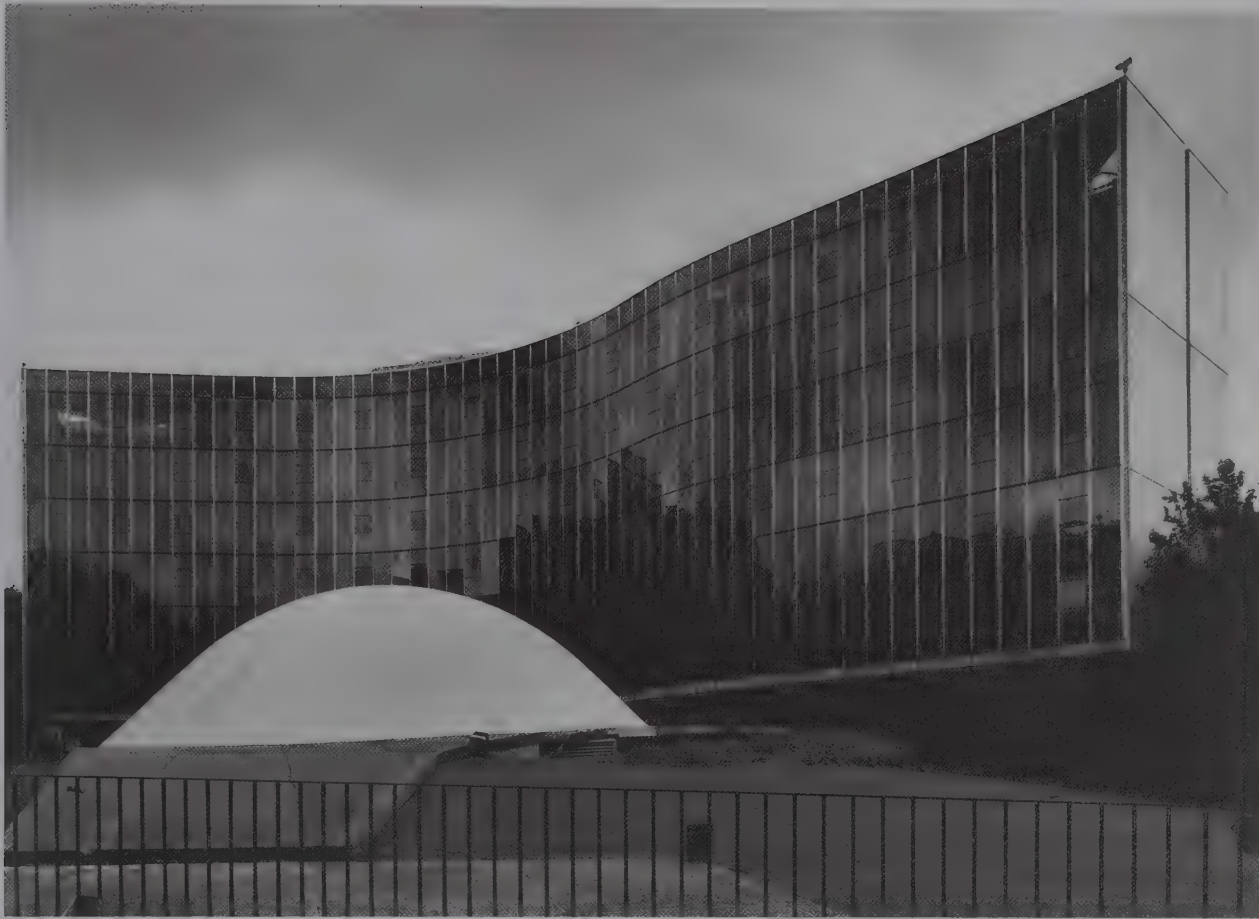
Maison de la Radio,
1955–63

Avenue du Président
Kennedy

beginning of an extended adventure in urbanism. Beginning with a plan developed by Zehruss in 1956, which created a configuration of street-level buildings, this project has gone from the laying of paving stones to the construction of towers that have become symbols of France's technological renewal. Moreover, the decision to create this new area soon generated a new transit program. De Gaulle had in fact intended to bring order to transportation in the Paris region, which he considered chaotic. Since La Défense was at the edge of the capital, a rehabilitation program was to be extended to the border of the suburbs, which urgently needed a new underground east-west link. The west, a bourgeois residential zone, also comprised, at the capital's limits, working-class districts, potentially dangerous in the eyes of the administration; by also becoming a district of large corporations, it could attract a different population, stabilized by new employment.

After the opening of the Défense-Etoile section

of the RER in 1970, the neighborhood was gradually linked to the new town of Marne-la-Vallée in the east and to Saint-Germain-en-Laye in the west. The new business district, the largest in Europe, became an emblem. When François Mitterrand decided to erect a monumental arch there, the operation was presented as the conclusion of the story of this part of the Parisian west: "Wager Won for La Défense," *Le Monde* announced in 1987.⁷² The story, however, was not yet over. The government-owned corporation created in 1958 to manage and oversee the operation was renewed in 1990 in its mission as "developer" until 2007: the objective from now on was to construct the "great axis" of the Parisian west, on natural soil and not on pavement, by developing the zone between the Arche and the Seine, to link Nanterre to La Défense and to Paris while avoiding "fractures" — purely a matter of real estate and roadwork, without the slightest monumental or technical originality required.



The third large building constructed in Paris during the period of conspicuous dynamism of the Fourth Republic, presided over by General de Gaulle, was the Maison de la Radio. Designed by Henry Bernard and inaugurated in 1963, this building was adopted immediately by Parisians, who appreciated its classic elegance and modern functions. A circular structure, dominated at its center by a tower of archives, it has shown no signs of wear since its creation and still serves as an essential place for public recordings of Radio France broadcasts, especially many concerts (FIG. 9.132).

With the Palais de l'Unesco, the CNIT, and the Maison de la Radio, the western part of Paris was equipped with modern buildings, each conceived for a very specific function, that did not encroach upon the urban fabric, while at the end of the 1960s the Brazilian master Oscar Niemeyer built the Communist Party headquarters (FIG. 9.133). From this point on, however,

the modernization of the capital could only be accelerated by other means, where the "signature" building would become an element in a program of broad-based, aggressive, and radical urbanization, as occurred in the evolution of the La Défense area. The inner city, the nerve center of Paris, was the first to be touched.

Les Halles and Beaubourg, 1969–77

The Les Halles affair had two phases of polemics—1966 to 1971 (over the plans) and 1972 to 1979 (over their realization)—which brought to the surface passions all the more intense in that they had to do with three areas mostly ignored up to that time: Paris in general, nineteenth-century iron architecture in particular, and, finally, the very conditions of urban renewal in the twentieth century. The destruction of Les Halles

9.133

Oscar Niemeyer
(b. 1907)

Communist Party
Headquarters, 1972



9.134

Jean-Claude Gautrand
*The Assassination of
 Baltard, 1971*

Silver print photograph
 Collection of the artist

seemed to be a key moment in awakening the population of Paris and especially the intellectuals, to what was at stake in the transformation of an urban fabric.

Decided by the Conseil de Paris in 1965 and put into effect in November 1968, the removal of the central market of Paris to Rungis left a large open zone where the buildings conceived by Victor Baltard between 1845 and 1858 remained. Since Haussmann, the neighborhood had never stopped changing, buildings being destroyed or heightened, the alignment of the medieval streets cut through, private *hôtels* being adapted for other functions.⁷³ In 1925 the Voisin plan of Le Corbusier⁷⁴ proposed a radical solution: skyscrapers would rise in the completely razed neighborhoods of Les Halles and the Marais. While none of Le Corbusier's plans for Paris were ever realized, fortunately, the question of what should be constructed at this site became urgent. The opinions of consulting architects changed several times: in 1967 some considered towers more than 650 feet (200 meters) high (in homage to the Voisin plan?), but the municipal council

limited the height of buildings to 100 feet (30 meters) and demanded green spaces. As the demolition of the pavilions got underway in 1971, urban planners responded definitively with a proposal that looked to the creation of the east-west RER: in place of Les Halles they would construct a central train station for the RER, a nerve center for the new underground transportation system of the city, as well as a vast commercial development patterned after the popular concept of "train-station markets."⁷⁵ After the demolition of the Halles pavilions, an excavation was begun where the future Châtelet train station would be built.

The "pit of Les Halles" was traumatic for Parisians, especially those who had mobilized against the demolition of Baltard's pavilions. Some intellectuals and artists attempted to take over the last condemned pavilion, where, among other events, theater performances were staged by Giorgio Strehler, like *Orlando Furioso* in 1970. From winter to summer of 1971, the demolition of Les Halles—"abruptly annihilated during the indifference

of August in Paris”⁷⁶—gave rise to a series of black-and-white photographs by Jean-Claude Gautrand, titled *L’Assassinat de Baltard* (FIG. 9.134).⁷⁷

In the end, the neighborhood of Les Halles went through twenty years of total reconstruction: a train station; a commercial forum designed by Claude Vasconi and Georges Pencreac’h, which opened in 1979; a tiered garden of “follies” by Jean Willerval and Jean Prouvé; and a pedestrian promenade (FIG. 9.135). The underground setup of the garden of Les Halles, entrusted to

Paul Chemetov and completed in 1985, did not highlight the elements that most deserved it, the Vidéotheque de Paris and the Auditorium. It was nevertheless the first true underground neighborhood, covering approximately five acres (2 hectares). Finally, the opening of the Centre Georges Pompidou in 1977 gave a new cultural destination to users of the RER, who, emerging from the underground station at Châtelet-Les-Halles, only had to cross boulevard Sébastopol to reach the new neighborhood of Horloge, with its chic buildings, artists’ studios, and new art galleries.

9.135

Jean Willerval (b. 1924)
and Jean Prouvé
(1901–1984)

Garden of the follies and
pedestrian promenade,
Les Halles, 1979–86







The Centre Georges Pompidou

As soon as he took office as president of the republic in 1969, Georges Pompidou had envisioned constructing a cultural center, not far from Les Halles, that would be dedicated to contemporary art, and particularly to lyrical abstraction. This would be the Centre National d'Art et de Culture Georges Pompidou, built at Beaubourg, an area abandoned since 1930 after the destruction of a few insalubrious blocks. Georges Pompidou thus concluded a long debate between the commissions created in 1958 by the state and the city of Paris to resolve the question of the renovation and rehabilitation of the Beaubourg neighborhoods, Les Halles and the Marais. The Conseil de Paris, in 1968, had made the fundamental decisions relative to the future of Les Halles and decided to place a public library at Beaubourg. As the cultural aspect seemed too meager in this initial form, the same council decided to enhance it in 1969. Georges Pompidou added a library devoted to the contemporary arts to his project, adopted by the city in 1970. It was finally determined that the center was to comprise a general library (the Bibliothèque Publique d'Information [BPI]), the Musée National d'Art Moderne, uniting the collections of the Palais de Tokyo and those of the Centre National d'Art Contemporain (CNAC), the Centre de Création Industrielle (CCI), and various rooms. It was a space for exhibition and conservation but not for artistic creation, except for the music section, added in 1973.

In 1971, after an exemplary competition, responsibility for the design of the Centre Pompidou fell to two young foreign architects, the Italian Renzo Piano and the English Richard Rogers, associates of the engineer Peter Rice. The program was complex, on the architectural as well as the urban planning levels. Moreover, the flow chart of functions was gradually modified and filled out. For example, the Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique (IRCAM), which was added to the original program, required an underground extension. As the structure rose along rue Beaubourg, huge steel tubes, colored green, blue, yellow, or red depending on their function, punctuated the alignment of the facade. In effect, the functional elements had become the exterior architecture. On the other façade, overlooking the gently sloping, open piazza on rue Saint-Martin, the zigzagging rise of the escalator added

9.136

Renzo Piano (b. 1937)
and Richard Rogers
(b. 1933)

Centre National d'Art
et de Culture Georges
Pompidou, 1977

a very assertive graphic line, earning the center a comparison to an oil refinery—to the great satisfaction of the architects: “The factory metaphor referred to the idea of producing culture,” said Piano. What now seems to him a utopian concept at least had the power to “loosen up the public’s relationship with a cultural institution.” The futuristic site no longer clashes today in a neighborhood that remains heterogeneous, punctuated by the interventions of the Haussmann era and by the real estate initiatives of the 1980s, which ignored the urbanistic projects of Piano and Rodgers.

Inaugurated on January 31, 1977, the center truly came to the fore as a central place in Paris, more so than many other “signature” buildings built in its wake (FIG. 9.136). IRCAM opened in 1978. Fully equipped with the most recent technologies, IRCAM realized the aims of its director, Pierre Boulez. The modular concert hall, christened “The Projection Space,” seemed revolutionary. Until the great overhaul of 1997–99, the Centre Pompidou frequently underwent repairs, under Renzo Piano’s direction, and twice, in 1987 and 1990, IRCAM was expanded. Its new spaces included the “Piano tower,” whose brick facade was mandated by the Commission des Sites so that it would blend more effectively with its neighbors.

The center, intended to accommodate 5,000 visitors per day, soon received 25,000. The architects’ desire—to accentuate technology for a more casual, less intimidating cultural center—was fulfilled. But the creators of the Centre Pompidou introduced another innovation, very important in France: they had conceived *from the ground up* a dynamic space meant for evolving functions, an architecture designed to accommodate crowds and allow them to circulate, not so much on the scale of a city as of a country.

Paradoxically, the Beaubourg meant the end of Les Halles on a cultural level. The international success of the Centre Pompidou made the polemics that the “pit of Les Halles” had fed completely beside the point. The large train-station market at Halles was a success from a technocratic, engineering point of view: an underground solution had been found to a central urban planning problem in the capital, with priority given to mass transit and to commercial priorities. The architecture and the garden seemed overdone. But from this twofold experience, Les Halles and Beaubourg, there were lessons: the

Parisian patrimony had its defenders, rehabilitation had knowledgeable supporters, and contemporary architectural creation was capable of evoking a passionate response. In face of the mediocrity of Les Halles, the success of Beaubourg guaranteed the possibility of finally making, in Paris itself, something entirely new.

The “Grands Travaux,” 1980–2000

In May 1981, following his election as president, François Mitterrand inherited several projects or construction sites from his predecessor Valéry Giscard d’Estaing—the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA), which did not yet have a location; a museum devoted to the nineteenth century in an old train station, the Gare d’Orsay; and the Cité des Sciences et de l’Industrie at La Villette—all of which had been put on hold by the first oil crisis. These three monumental projects, while controversial (particularly the very complex La Villette project), responded to real cultural and practical necessities, and François Mitterrand became personally involved in each of them. La Villette was completed in 1985 (Géode and Grande Halle) and 1986 (Cité des Sciences); the Musée d’Orsay in 1986; and in 1987 the Institut du Monde Arabe was inaugurated. As for the projects begun by Mitterrand himself, the Ministry of Finances in Bercy, the Opéra de la Bastille, the pyramid at the Louvre, and the Grande Arche at La Défense were completed in 1989; the “Très Grande Bibliothèque” (Bibliothèque Nationale de France, or BNF) at Tolbiac, in 1995; and the Cité de la Musique at La Villette, in two sections, the first in 1990, the second in 1995. To manage these large construction projects, to which the restoration of the Muséum National d’Histoire Naturelle should be added, the State Secretariat of Grands Travaux was created.

Taking these monumental realizations of the Mitterrand era as a whole, it is difficult to make a pronouncement on the president’s main goal or to ascertain a particular objective: the architects selected through competitions did not represent a “school” and were not all of the same generation, but they had already proven themselves, in France and elsewhere. From a formal point of view, the structures have no common denominator, beyond the features common to international



architecture of the 1980s, from Japan to the United States. Each building has its own physiognomy, as well as a specific function in Paris. Might their aesthetic diversity be a measure of the international eclecticism of the president of an enlightened democracy?

The Arche de la Défense (FIG. 9.137), conceived by the Danish Johan Otto von Spreckelsen and inaugurated in July 1989, marked the development of a perspective toward the west that the city had been striving to achieve for three centuries, as we have noted. The Opéra de la Bastille, also inaugurated in 1989, seemed an anomaly in several respects. Concert halls in Paris had become the recurring bad dream of state and city cultural administrators; bandied about by the media, the idea spread that no Parisian hall had suitable space, facilities, or acoustics. As for the Opéra Garnier, its day was said to be past: it had an archaic stage, deplorable acoustics, high-priced seats, an old-fashioned hall, and insufficient space for ballet rehearsals. In the late 1970s plans for a large opera house obsessed the administration. While the project for a true “musical city” at La Villette went forward, Mitterrand decided to have a building erected at place de la Bastille, equipped with an opera house

that could accommodate much larger audiences, as well as an auditorium.

The winner of the competition was the Canadian Carlos Ott, whose project took into consideration the constraints of an irregular site that lent itself poorly to the construction of such an edifice. Seen from the exterior, with its massive façades and monumental staircase, unused in favor of ground-floor access, the Opéra de la Bastille could be the headquarters of some corporation. In the large hall, some of the 2,700 seats were very far from the stage. The small hall (700 seats) was curiously underused. The reception spaces were reduced to a simple, glassed-in, interior ambulatory. Only its sophisticated stage technology, and the creation of adequate spaces for offices, set design and costume workshops, and corps de ballet rehearsals, justified such a construction. Tickets were as expensive as at the Opéra Garnier, but they were nevertheless bought, if not by the mass public then at least by the opera-going public, faithful in spite of everything. With the announcement of the construction of an opera house on the place de la Bastille, the transformation of the surrounding neighborhood was set in motion. Old buildings were renovated

9.137

Johan Otto von
Spreckelsen (1929–1987)
and Paul Andreu
(b. 1938)

Arche de la Défense,
1989

as a young, middle-class, intellectual, and artistic population flocked to this popular central area, well served by public transportation, where a rapid increase in real estate value seemed guaranteed.

The park and activities project at La Villette had a completely different dimension. Creating a modern cultural center devoted to the sciences and technology in Paris was rationalized as a response to the acceleration of high technology and the leading role accorded to energy, biology, and computer science in research programs. The aim was also to create out of whole cloth, in an unpopular area of Paris, a place for education and leisure activity. Finally, the project was meant as a dignified way out of the financial mess that had become a scandal—the slaughterhouse affair of 1974.

The state had assumed a considerable debt and an industrial wasteland of 136 acres (55 hectares) when a

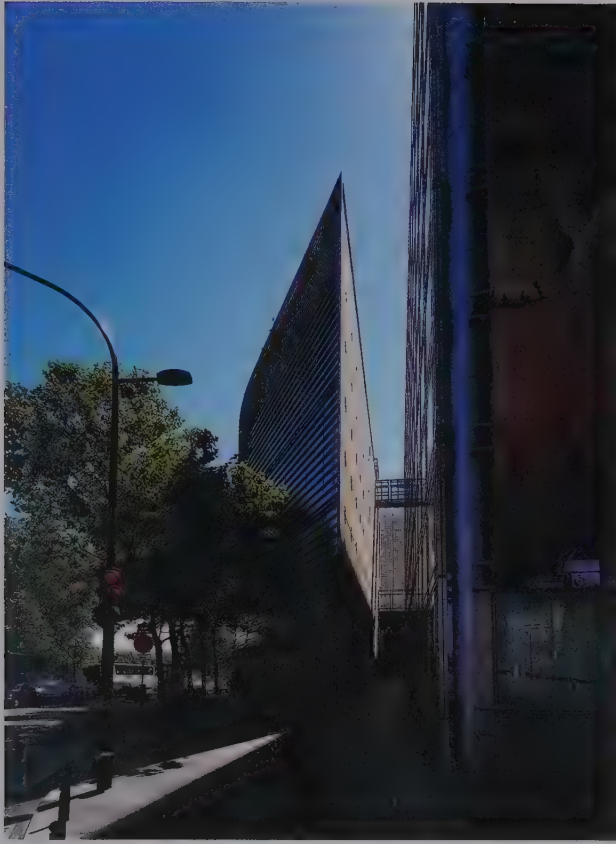
decision was made to establish a series of buildings and a large garden on this land, under the responsibility of a government corporation. Made skittish by the Les Halles affair, those responsible for the project—notably François Barré—were keen on maintaining the remaining iron architecture in situ. In the enormous slaughterhouse building, already reused in the 1960s as a sales hall, the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie was built, between 1979 and 1986. Thanks to the French architect Adrien Fainsilber, who supervised several teams, each in charge of a specific interior space, the result showed great technical refinement. The Geode (1985), set on a smooth pool of water on the side of the building overlooking the park, houses a multimedia room equipped with a hemispheric screen of 10,760 square feet (1,000 square meters). President Giscard d'Estaing judged its futuristic style to be out of harmony with French taste, but



9.138

I. M. Pei (b. 1917)

View of interior of the
pyramid, Musée du
Louvre, 1993



as a national scandal. Unlike the Les Halles controversy, indignation here had to do not with a subtraction from but with an addition to the historical setting. Also unlike Les Halles, the indignation came from a small group; curiosity and astonishment prevailed among the public at large. In truth, the technical prowess and aesthetic pleasure of the glass, set in a structure of aluminum and supported by a netting of stainless steel, interested specialists and amateurs more than the crime of *lèse-majesté* in regard to the nineteenth-century Louvre (FIG. 9.138). Here again the glass, with its transparency and its reflections, as well as the beauty of the metallic fittings seen from the interior of the reception area, with its elegant spiral staircase and ascending escalators, disarmed detractors of the architecture of public commissions under Mitterrand. After the inauguration of the pyramid in 1989, the enormous construction projects undertaken in each department of the museum, and their extension into the Richelieu wing, made possible by the relocation of the Ministry of Finance, continued until the dawn of the twenty-first century. Their success was due to the constantly maintained dialogue between the architects and successive directors of the Louvre (Michel Laclotte, then Pierre Rosenberg)

9.139 (left)
Jean Nouvel (b. 1945)
Institut du Monde
Arabe, 1987
View of “fracture”
separating the two
buildings

Fainsilber succeeded in creating a superb monumental object, a sphere covered by 6,433 triangular plaques of mirrored steel in which all the nuances of the Paris sky are reflected (see FIG. 9.111).

Circle, square, triangle: the sphere placed as a landmark at the entrance of the Science Museum at La Villette, the arch opening onto the horizon of Paris to the west, and the pyramid marking new access to the Louvre represented three pure forms, grand in scale and conspicuously visible. Behind these landmarks, the real complexity of the technical and material articulation of the new architecture was hidden (in contrast to Piano and Rogers’s building at Beaubourg); a straightforward geometric ensemble conferred a sort of clarity on what is today the most sophisticated of the arts, public architecture.

Created by the Chinese-American architect I. M. Pei (whom Mitterrand chose for all the constructions at the Grand Louvre), the pyramid was intended to form a glass canopy for the new reception areas of the Grand Louvre, while at the same time signaling the Louvre’s new main entrance in the cour Napoléon. Putting the commercial facilities belowground permitted access to the museum from the parking area as well. “Pei’s pyramid” unleashed a campaign in the press that was political in origin; some architecture critics denounced this structure



9.140
Jean Nouvel (b. 1945)
Institut du Monde
Arabe, 1987
Bays of the south façade
seen from the interior
of the library

9.I41

Paul Chemetov (b. 1928)
and Borja Huidobro
(b. 1936)

Ministère de l'Economie
et des Finances, 1989



9.I42

Gérard Garouste
(b. 1946)

The Tree of Knowledge,
1996

Mural, Bibliothèque
Nationale de France



and heads of the museum's departments.

The Institut du Monde Arabe, completed in 1987 by Jean Nouvel; the Ministry of Finance, realized in 1989 by Paul Chemetov; and the Cité de la Musique, completed in 1995 by Christian de Portzamparc, hardly caused a stir compared with the controversy surrounding the pyramid. The IMA, whose program had been decided by Valéry Giscard d'Estaing but whose site had been chosen by François Mitterrand, at the corner of boulevard Saint-Germain and quai Saint-Bernard, was erected between 1981 and 1987. Nouvel, aided by Gilbert Lézènes, Pierre Soria, and Architecture Studio, dealt with the irregular site with great originality. The main objective was to combine two functions—a museum and a library—and to offer an acceptable image of Middle Eastern tradition without superfluous exoticism, as with the *moucharaby* (an external balcony enclosed with latticework), the patio, engraved glass, and the use of fine marble plaques. The northeastern façade curves along the road facing the Seine. The southern, rectilinear side of the building parallels the north façade of a building of the Faculté des Sciences at Jussieu, constructed by Edouard Albert twenty years earlier, a campus that remains one of the most controversial examples of metallic architecture of the 1960s. The IMA, composed of two buildings, paradoxically finds its unity in the vertical “fracture” that separates them (FIG. 9.139). Another void, the patio, brings light into the interior part of the museum. The means of circulation are related to the vertical void and, remaining visible, give a gossamer touch to the whole.

Offering an exceptional view from its terrace of the chevet of Notre-Dame and the succession of Seine bridges, the Institut du Monde Arabe won over the public at large with its architectural conception and its discreet modernism, in spite of administrative, financial, and diplomatic difficulties that make its functioning delicate. One false note came from a mechanism that was the pride of its creators: the entire south façade was made up of windows in square metallic frames, whose automatic slats were supposed to open and close in response to variations of natural light (FIG. 9.140). But the activity of the mechanism was so constant that it had to be turned off. The design of this façade nevertheless remains one of the most elegant in Paris.

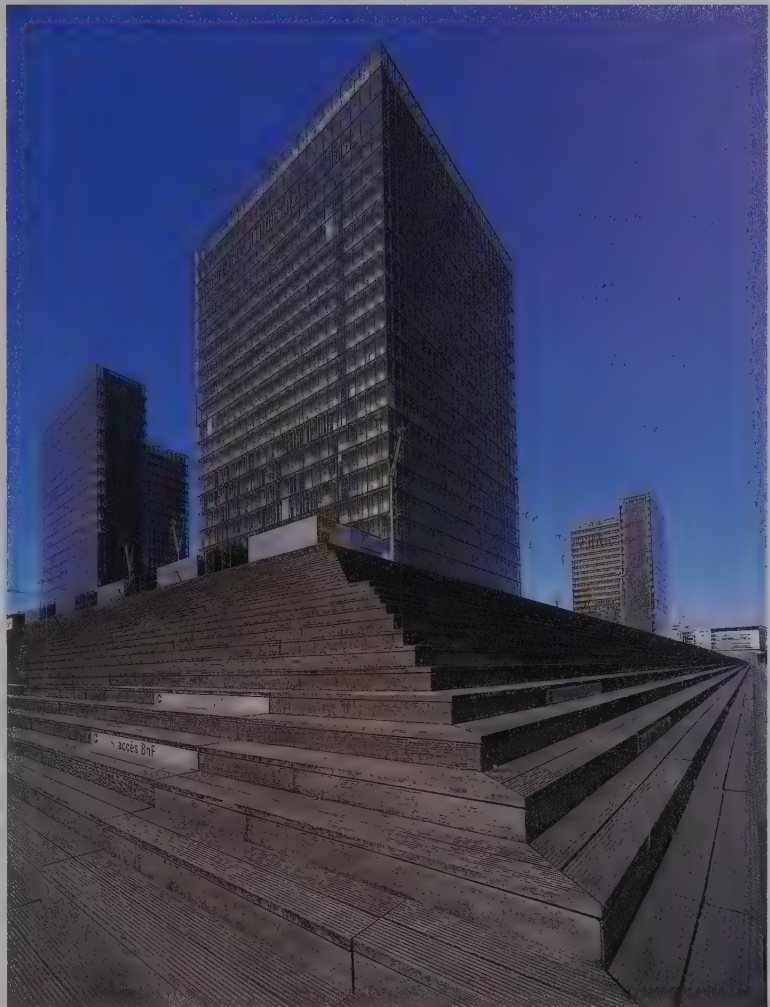
On the right bank of the Seine, to the east, rose

another building inaugurated in 1989: the Ministère de l'Economie et des Finances, serving the ministry that had moved out of the Richelieu wing of the Louvre after years of discussion. It became a nodal point for the development of a new financial district and residential neighborhood surrounding the Gare de Lyon, a few hundred yards distant. Though a few blocks from the parc de Bercy and from the new neighborhood of Saint-Emilion, and very close to the Palais Omnisports de Bercy, built by Michel Andrault and Pierre Parat, the large building by Paul Chemetov and Borja Huidobro seems literally placed above the everyday hubbub, with no relationship to the street. This “fortress” is sheltered behind rectilinear facades elevated on immense pillars. In contempt of the aesthetic at the edges of the Seine, the building, constructed at right angles to the river,

9.143

Dominique Perrault
(b. 1953)

Bibliothèque Nationale
de France, 1997



breaks the river's line with its projecting face. Seen from the opposite bank, it advances like an unfinished monumental bridge or a large, disturbing machine (FIG. 9.141).

Upstream rises one of the last of the Grands Travaux, the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, or BNF (FIG. 9.142). An enormous interior courtyard separates its four towers, which are built at right angles to one another: the court's surface is equal to that of the place de la

Concorde. The project, designed by Dominique Perrault, had to be reworked several times to attain dual objectives: a library that could preserve books and deliver them to readers efficiently, and a technical installation that aimed to create a "digital entity." The use of glass as an exterior cladding had unfortunate consequences; to prevent light from damaging the books, it had to be blocked with interior devices made of wood. During the day, the



9.144
Christian de
Portzamparc (b. 1944)
Cité de la Musique,
1995

yellowish look was not very appealing. No one knows yet if the excellence of the internal functioning, so hoped for, will one day make people forget the cold gigantism of this construction, or what will become of the thirteenth arrondissement and the plans for real estate construction in the area. It remains to be seen whether the new library, whose four right angles rise proudly above its paving stone, its staircases, and its garden below, will promote new life in the neighborhood.

To find a more successful complex, we might return to La Villette, where the Cité de la Musique, realized by Christian de Portzamparc, conveys a quality too rare in Paris today: suppleness of line, boldness of open spaces, and well-considered pedestrian circulation—in short, it demonstrates a will to “urbanize” architecture in all the senses of the term, over and above the ability to get from design to concrete. The completion of the two projects assigned to Portzamparc—the Conservatoire National de la Musique et de la Danse, on the one hand, and concert halls and an instrument museum, on the other—would take ten years, from 1984 to 1995, and would be plagued by financial and political complications. In 1994 Portzamparc was the first French architect to receive the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the “Nobel Prize of architecture.” Involved as an architect of the post-war generation in the great debates on the social role of the builder at the Ecole Nationale des Beaux-Arts in 1968, he was already famous for his originality in achievements such as the housing development on rue des Hautes-Formes (1979), the Café Beaubourg (1985), and the Ecole de la Danse de l’Opéra de Nanterre (1988).

The project at La Villette was distinguished by an exceptional “entrance to the city,” a refined aesthetic, a successful interior circulation among three poles that might have been ignored, and attention to the opening to the garden. Portzamparc, in fact, is one of the rare people to envisage a building as an ensemble structured by constraints other than technical ones, and more particularly by exterior or interior links and spaces of circulation, like his “musical street.” Here, several pure forms delineate real or virtual paths: triangular, spiral. The roofs themselves vary in slope following the buildings, while a single canopy serves both to link the four plots overlooking avenue Jean-Jaurès and to favor their acoustic protection (FIG. 9.144). At the antipodes of the spatial concept of the Centre Pompidou, the Cité

de la Musique defines the second strong period of public architectural creation in Paris. Pierre Boulez chose it to house the Ensemble Intercontemporain (EIC) that he created in the 1970s and conducts his concerts in the configurable hall whose construction and acoustics he personally supervised.

The Museum Explosion

In 1936 the Popular Front government launched a set of initiatives affecting the creation of museums and a better distribution of their collections: the Musée de l’Homme and the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires at the Palais de Chaillot, and the Musée d’Art Moderne at the Palais de Tokyo. At the beginning of the 1930s a new policy for the presentation of works had been put in place for the galleries of the Louvre, but the war, then the occupation, had put the projects on hold. In 1948 the reopening of the Louvre’s renovated Salon Carré provoked a lukewarm reaction from critics: René-Jean, in *Le Monde*, found the lighting too harsh and waited with resignation for the state to buy velvet to cover the walls left bare.⁷⁸ In the following decades, museum renovation and construction monopolized discussions all the more bitter since a budget explosion in favor of museums in Paris gave rise to numerous architecture and design projects in the 1970s, as well as the undertaking of ambitious construction projects.

The creation and renovation of museums followed an international movement starting in the late 1960s, reaching from Spain to the United States and Japan, and including the Federal Republic of Germany, where approximately five hundred new museums were created between 1965 and 1985. In Paris this development peaked somewhat later, with more interior conversions than new construction. The Centre Pompidou and the Cité des Sciences were exceptions, but these were buildings with multiple functions, not ones planned around a single collection. The affair of Baltard’s Les Halles and the debate over the maintenance of iron architecture had unleashed an unusual vigilance in the city and ministerial administrations in favor of the legacy of the nineteenth century. The creation or renovation of a museum was a golden opportunity to make something new from the old or put something new

into the old, without an increasingly sensitive public opinion crying scandal—or so it was hoped.

The hope was in vain: reaction to the first projects was virulent. As with the pyramid of the Louvre, ferocious critics who opposed the renovation of the Gare d'Orsay came from a cultivated milieu where the problem of the collections and the public was of less concern than preserving the status quo. Political opposition to presidential choices often prevailed over objective considerations, and most 1980s projects were put into place in an atmosphere of heated debate. Some went unnoticed, however, eclipsed by debate over the "Orsay" and the pyramid.

The activist approach that overtook the cultural administration in the 1980s and 1990s sometimes had spectacular effects, as in the case of "artists' museums," which were also widely affected by the wave of renovation: the extension of the Musée Bourdelle by Christian de Portzamparc in 1992; the identical restoration of Musée Gustave Moreau; the interior restructuring of the Musée Delacroix, reopened in 1996; gallerist Dina Vierny's creation of the Musée Maillol in 1995; and the refurbishing of the gardens of the Musée Rodin, the Musée Zadkine, the Musée Delacroix.

The history of the Brancusi studio is unusual. Bequeathed to the state by Constantin Brancusi in 1957, the studio at 11 impasse Ronsin was reconstructed three times: first, in the basement of the Palais de Tokyo in 1962, then in 1977 and again in 1997 at the edges of the piazza of the Centre Pompidou. Renzo Piano was passionate about this "minuscule but extraordinarily complex project,"⁷⁹ which required displaying all the works in wood and plaster, all the tools and furniture, while preserving the original space of the studio. In the third version, inaugurated in 1997, walls of the studio were replaced by panes of glass, and a surrounding corridor was created from which visitors could see the space. Despite the changes to the original form, the architect wanted above all to restore volume and a luminous ambiance. The reconstituted studio is now called the Musée Brancusi.

Paris offers a number of examples of old buildings converted into museums, where architects and curators have had to cooperate closely. After Picasso's heirs paid inheritance taxes by donating works of art to the French state, the Hôtel Salé in the Marais district (see FIG. 3.102)

was chosen to permanently exhibit the prestigious new national collection. From 1976 to 1984 the architect Roland Simounet headed the project, in conjunction with Dominique Bozo, then director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, who had negotiated the gift with the heirs. The transformation of the interior architecture of this seventeenth-century mansion scarcely posed a problem of preserving the historical interior, as the original building had been disfigured by successive interventions; only the staircase and a few preserved details required particular respect. Simounet, who wanted to organize the space so that visitors could experience the collection and also meet the technical requirements of a museum, complemented the beautiful historic staircase with a contemporary ramp whose walls lent themselves to temporary installations.

One of the first postwar museums designed to house contemporary art exclusively (the *donation* Picasso included works by other artists that Picasso had collected), the Musée Picasso remains a celebrated case of the restoration of an old, private building in the service of modern culture.

At the Musée d'Orsay, under construction from 1980 to 1986, the challenge was to transform a railway terminal and its accompanying hotel, built by Victor Laloux for the Compagnie de Chemin de Fer d'Orléans and completed in 1900. The government of Georges Pompidou had put forward plans in 1973 to renovate the disused terminal, a project embraced by President Giscard d'Estaing. Open competitions were held in 1979 to select the structural architect (a team assembled by ACT Architecture), and in 1980 to choose the architect for the interior renovation, Italian architect Gae Aulenti. President Mitterrand affirmed the government's commitment to the project in 1981 while announcing the project of the Grand Louvre, and the presidency of the establishment was entrusted to Jacques Rigaut. In fact, the cultural program for the Orsay changed several times during the construction work. Instead of becoming a museum of the art of the mid- to late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (to 1914), the Orsay could have become a sort of museum of society, integrating the collections of objects representing the history of the social upheavals during the second industrial revolution in France. After lively debate, the grand historical program was finally put to rest. The regrouping of all art

forms from 1848 to 1914 (from monumental painting to photography, furniture, and sculpture, with a program of concerts, films and lectures) became the new museum's mission. Exceptions to this general rule include representing the entire history of photography, whose department was created from scratch, along with a department of decorative arts, in the course of five years of acquisitions.

The Musée d'Orsay demonstrated the prominent role of interior design in contemporary museum practice. Gae Aulenti succeeded in creating a tour de force that incited passionate reactions; the Musée d'Orsay left no one indifferent. Laloux's original building is one of the most beautiful Parisian iron structures, though he took care to sheathe it in regulation Beaux-Arts ornament. Gae Aulenti took up the challenge of inserting a very elaborate interior architecture, which imposed wall and space constraints (FIG. 9.145): this is what the curators of the museum wanted, so the idea of a transparent or configurable museum was rejected. The strong interior architecture at times seemed created for its own sake. The polemics on this subject having been exhausted, the virtues and defects of Aulenti's conception remain, but it is obvious that the Orsay has become an inimitable presence in the panorama of museums created after World War II.

After much controversy, the project for the "Musée des Arts Premiers," dear to Jacques Chirac, which had been transformed into the Musée des Arts et des Civilisations (MAC), was established under the dual direction of Germain Viatte, former director of the Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, and the anthropologist Maurice Godelier. The task at 29–55 quai Branly was to make use of a vast, long-neglected site to create, in addition to 81,000 square feet (7,500 square meters) of protected green space, a structure to house the new museum, as well as research and teaching activities linked to the reinstallation of several collections derived from other museums in Paris. In 1999 a group led by Jean Nouvel was selected in an international competition for what was already being called the quai Branly museum. Nouvel came up with an original proposal whose overall plan was perfectly adapted to the site; its curved facades and complementary sharp angles were characteristic of the Institut du Monde Arabe, but here there was a

single volume (FIG. 9.146). The creation of the garden gave rise to detailed studies relating to the concept of disorientation that the architect intended to evoke with this building: light would play an essential role, creating fluorescent halos thanks to thousands of small diodes planted among the lawns, with a "watery light" unfolding in the garden at the onset of evening. Planted even under the building itself, this garden would assure the junction between the northern and southern entrances at ground level. The wooden exterior of the south façade was painted in attractive colors, while the north façade presented overhanging "boxes" made of stucco and set in a *moucharaby*. Because of its location beside the

9.145

Gae (Gaetana) Aulenti
(b. 1927)

Interior of the
Musée d'Orsay, 1986





9.146
Jean Nouvel (b. 1945)
Musée du Quai Branly
Computer rendering,
1999

river, the project is protected by elaborate waterproofing measures that include a molded perimeter wall, approximately sixty-five feet (20 meters) high, in a bed of clay, as well as merlons of clay earth, sufficient to protect against an anticipated “hundred-year flood” of the Seine. Such a complex undertaking required considerable imagination and provided an exceptional opportunity to take on new technical challenges, especially concerning the assemblage of materials. Unlike Parisian buildings constructed after 1960 that were sheathed in glass, such as the headquarters for the Communist Party by Oscar Niemeyer completed in 1971 (see FIG. 9.131) or even the Fondation Cartier by Jean Nouvel (FIG. 9.147), the MAC presented a façade where, for once, wood “enveloped” glass.

Thus in the year 2000 those responsible for the national patrimony and Parisian architects found themselves faced with two gigantic programs for museums of collections that were not European: the task at hand was to display the works of civilizations long considered to be either exotic or “primitive.” At the Musée National des Arts Asiatiques—Guimet as well as at quai Branly, arts of non-European cultures inspired architectural proposals of grand scope. Their creators were perfectly conscious of what is at stake historically in separating the French tradition from its colonial or expansionist past. The main difference between the two projects concerned the collections: in the case of the Far East, these existed, but they had to be liberated from a narrow or

partial historiography; in the case of the MAC, the collections derived from the Musée de l’Homme and the Musée des Arts Africains et Océaniens were to be supplemented by a new collection of works from Africa, the Pacific region, the Americas, and Australia.

In this context, the transformation of the Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires (Centre d’Ethnologie Française), created by Georges-Henri Rivière in 1937 based on the collections of the Musée de l’Homme, was inevitable. In spite of its extraordinary collection of 800,000 pieces from the preindustrial era in France, preserved in the classical and luminous building erected at the edges of the Bois de Boulogne from 1959 to 1969 by Jean Dubuisson, this little-known museum was for many years neglected by the Direction des Musées de France. Establishing a more visibly “European” orientation, parallel to initiatives in Brussels and Berlin in this area, was entrusted to its director, Michel Colardelle. In 1998 its transformation into a “Musée des Civilisations de la France et de l’Europe” was announced, to be installed in a wing of the Palais de Chaillot. After many changes in direction, a “Cité du Patrimoine et de l’Architecture” was entrusted in 1998 to the historian Jean-Louis Cohen, encompassing the Musée des Monuments Français and the Institut Français d’Architecture, installed in the Palais de Chaillot, to be renovated by the architect Jean-François Bôdin. This much-anticipated complex, to open in 2004, brings together the Musée d’Architecture, successor to the Musée des Monuments Français; a



library and archives; the Agence d'Action Architecturale–Institut Français d'Architecture, whose function is to promote the creation of a “living architecture” and to educate the public at large; and the Centre des Hautes Etudes de Chaillot, formerly a center for advanced study in the history and conservation of historic monuments. “Museums” such as this are much more than spaces for

exhibition and curatorial activity; the Cité is intended to be a place where citizens and professionals enter into a dialogue about the future of the built environment, “a place of exchanges and of confrontation.” While the success of this endeavor is yet to be determined, what a distance has been traveled in Paris from the days when Les Halles was demolished!

9.147
Jean Nouvel (b. 1945)
Fondation Cartier pour
l'Art Contemporain,
1990–93



9.156
Richard Meier (b. 1934)
Canal Plus Building,
1992
Rue des Cévennes

When the set of projects is brought to term, the two banks of the Seine will present themselves as a series of cultural sites and public edifices: on the Right Bank, from the vivacious “Ciné-Cité” made of glass (Bercy-Saint-Emilion) to the sober Maison de la Radio; on the Left Bank, from the austere Bibliothèque François-Mitterrand to the delicate Maison de la Culture du Japon, whose interior has been fashioned by the Japanese architect Tadao Ando, and the Canal Plus headquarters by Richard Meier (FIG. 9.156). Thus, without an overall direction, and in spite of constant political changes, a new powerful cultural axis is being established in Paris today. Despite an absence of architectural harmony, it constitutes a new path of prestige for the city from east to west. There remains the question whether this will also result in a greater socioeconomic unity from south to north, between the Right Bank and the Left Bank, a social utopia after centuries of division. The desire is certainly there, as proven by the talk of “social links” that in 1998 surrounded Marc Mimram’s construction

of the new Solferino *passerelle* linking the Musée d’Orsay with the Tuileries. There were similar intentions for the footbridge, which the city and port of Paris entrusted in 1999 to the young Austrian architect Dietmar Feichtinger, to link the neighborhood of the Bibliothèque Nationale to the new neighborhood of Bercy by integrating businesses, as was once done by the bridges of the capital. As for the future MAC, it will benefit from the addition in 2000 of a staircase at the corner of the Debilly *passerelle* which was included in the city’s project for the embellishment of the Seine banks. Architectural reinforcement of the east of Paris, *passages* multiplied on the north-south axis, the visible unfolding of a new “Seine” axis: the internal renovation of nineteenth-century buildings and constructions determined by the state or the city in the domain of the arts and sciences have such important consequences in the urban panorama itself that one might compare these transformations in the course of less than half a century to those that made Paris a new capital in the seventeenth century.

POSTSCRIPT:

PARIS AS SPECTACLE

Up to the end of the 1950s, Paris was still the city of Haussmann, in most respects, with certain well-recognized cultural centers. The engineers and architects of the Third Republic had done little more than complete an urban fabric, which, for its time, was practically perfect. But beginning in the 1960s, Parisian urbanism, having become a battleground of seething passions, as Bertrand Delanoë has described it,⁸⁰ was in the midst of a new period when the form of the city we know today was being created. The Haussmannian grid remained the basis for more or less audacious innovations that gave a new reading to façades, buildings, and the movement of traffic. As it reached the final years of the twentieth century, Paris ceased to resemble a giant construction site and took on a certain style that we might call the promenade-city and the city as spectacle, each being dependent on the other.

Artistic *événements*—temporary installations or events—that would have been inconceivable in the 1960s became possible, for example, the blue illumination of the obelisk in the place de la Concorde imagined by Yves Klein. All sorts of public places became temporary sites for sculpture and projects with light; these included the pont des Arts, the canal Saint-Martin, the esplanade of the Invalides, and especially the boulevards of the Champs-Élysées, where in 1999 the city presented *Champs de la sculpture 2000*, some fifty sculptural works and installations by contemporary artists from around the world.

Fernand Léger had wanted to clean the façades of Paris and project onto them colored beams of light. If only the first part of his plan was carried out (at Malraux's instigation in the 1960s), it remains the case that the newly white façades of Paris did indeed change the tone of the city. The glass architecture which dominated those *quartiers* that were entirely renovated, like the quai Citroën, the gare de Lyon–Bercy–Saint-Emilion, the area southwest of Montparnasse, and, closer in, the new Rive Gauche *quartier* southeast of the gare d'Austerlitz, not only introduced an unprecedented clarity, but also an aesthetic of reflection, which lovers of the ever-changing sky of Paris could well appreciate. To put it another way, Paris is a city that lends itself easily to spectacle and one which

is certainly fascinated by itself.

The future of photography in Paris becomes a serious question in this context. There is the “old Paris,” which has lent its familiar motifs to photography for a century or more. After World War II, the pictures of Edouard Boubat, Brassäi, Henri Cartier-Bresson, Robert Doisneau, Willy Ronis, and Izis finally completed a visual legend of the capital that began a century earlier in the midst of the demolitions of the Second Empire. Widely disseminated by way of books, albums, and postcards, their photographs—some appearing in the “portfolios” included in the volumes of the present book—have shaped our view of Paris and have directed our vision, establishing characteristic points of view, which the cinema, among other mediums, has abundantly reinforced. The attraction that Paris continues to exert on photographers is obvious; André Kertész, for example, returned to live in the capital from 1980 to 1984, and William Klein has made it his home since 1948. Kertész and Klein could be taken as representative of alternative visions: on the one hand, the black-and-white tradition of work based on light and shadow, on the silhouette, on how the image is framed—a photography of the street and the parks, of the Seine; on the other hand, photography characterized by saturated color, sophisticated framing of the image, a photography fascinated by the vagaries of human appearance, the wildness of night life, the ambiguous beauty of a scaffolding at a construction site in the thirteenth arrondissement.

What gives a specific character to the production of images in Paris in the past thirty years is the prominent role of celebrations. Official state ceremonies intended to reinforce collective memory have, in the last twenty or so years, become connected again with the theatrical spirit that the French revolution brought to its official fêtes. Such occasions have multiplied since 1981, thanks to the efforts of the Ministry of Culture, and also because of the anniversaries that occurred toward the end of the century.

The Bicentennial of the French Revolution, which took place in July 1989, became the occasion for an immense parade of the nations of the world and of the regions of France, conceived by Jean-Paul Goude, which

proceeded along the Champs-Élysées, from the Arc de Triomphe to the place de la Concorde (FIG. 9.149). This was highly symbolic since this route is used by the traditional military parade on July 14 (Bastille Day), the Champs-Élysées axis being considered the spinal cord of the city, since one can look along it to the Grande Arche. Ten years later, the “Gates of the Year 2000,” a national project proposed by the Ministry of Culture, took place once again on the Champs-Élysées: eleven international artists assumed the task of interpreting,

in a magical and yet very high-tech way, the beginning of the new millennium, each using an immense wheel as an allusion to the popular expositions of a century ago and as a symbol of the passing of time.

Paris, narcissistic city, photogenic city, city of images, will not remain shut up within its own remarkable artistic history. The past sixty years demonstrate that in spite of everything, Paris remains open to the creativity of the entire world.



9.149

Parade organized by Jean-Paul Goude for the Bicentennial of the French Revolution, July 1989

9.150 (opposite)

Fireworks silhouette the Eiffel Tower, Bicentennial of the French Revolution, July 1989











C A F É S A N D B R A S S E R I E S



(pages 1548-1549)
 Henri Cartier-Bresson
 (b. 1908)
 Café scene with mural,
 1953

Inge Morath
 (1923-2002)
 Café, 1955



Peter Turnley
(b. 1955)

Brasserie de
l'Île Saint-Louis,
1994



Peter Turnley
(b. 1955)

Café, the Marais,
1975



Henri Cartier-Bresson
(b. 1908)

A waiter carrying chairs,
2000

NOTES

CHAPTER VI

1. Jean Tulard, *Dictionnaire du Second Empire* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), 882.
2. This remark, perhaps apocryphal, is cited in Colin Jones, *The Cambridge History of France* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 212.
3. Cited in *The Second Empire, 1852–1870: Art in France under Napoleon III* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1978), 303.
4. Ibid.
5. Edmond Goncourt and Jules de Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for August 14, 1879.
6. Cited in *The Second Empire*, 359.
7. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for January 21, 1863.
8. Cited in Tulard, *Dictionnaire*, 365.
9. Anne M. Wagner, “The Prince Imperial and His Dog,” cat. entry, in Peter Fusco and H. W. Janson, eds., *The Romantics to Rodin: French Nineteenth-Century Sculpture from North American Collections*, exh. cat. (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1980), 152.
10. Tulard, *Dictionnaire*, 902.
11. “If without scandalizing anyone, I was able to enter the sewers, handle putrid matter, spend part of my time in the refuse pits, and live as it were in the midst of the most abject and disgusting products of human congregations, why should I blush to tackle a sewer of another kind (more unspeakably foul, I admit, than all the others) in the well-grounded hope of effecting some good by examining all the facets it may offer?” Alexandre Parent-Duchâlet, *Hygiène publique, ou mémoires sur les questions les plus importantes de l’hygiène appliquées aux professions et travaux d’utilité publique* (Paris: Baillière, 1836), 1:7; quoted in Charles Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute: Representing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century France* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1989), 54.
12. Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire: Prostitution and Sexuality in France after 1850*, trans. Alan Sheridan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990), 193. Corbin’s account is the best analysis of prostitution in France in the second half of the nineteenth century.
13. Stéphanie Tascher del la Pagerie, manuscript memoirs, Bibliothèque Nationale, Département des Manuscrits (1848–71). Quoted in Pierre Apraxine, Xavier Demange, and Françoise Heilbrun, *La Comtesse de Castiglione par elle-même* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1999), 50, n. 20.
14. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for July 26, 1868.
15. These are admirably presented in Apraxine, Demange, and Heilbrun, *La Comtesse de Castiglione*.
16. “Si elle avait été simple et naturelle, elle aurait bouleversé le monde.” Quoted in *ibid.*, 18.
17. Frédéric Chopin, letter of June 8, 1847, cited in Fusco and Janson, *The Romantics to Rodin*, 176; from J. Ziegler, “Madame Sabatier (1822–1890): Quelques Notes biographiques,” *Bulletin du Bibliophile* (1977): 371.
18. Théophile Gautier, “La Femme piquée par un serpent de M. Clésinger,” *L’Artiste* 10 (1847): 122; cited in Fusco and Janson, *Romantics to Rodin*, 176.
19. Editorial in *Le Journal des artistes*, 1847; quoted in Albert Boime, *Thomas Couture and the Eclectic Vision* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1980), 136.
20. Quoted in Boime, *Thomas Couture*, 160.
21. G. Bertautes-Couture, *Thomas Couture, 1815–1879: Sa vie—son oeuvre—son caractère—ses idées—sa méthode, par lui-même et par son petit-fils* (Paris: Le Garrec, 1932), 74–75; quoted in *The Second Empire*, 278.
22. See Caroline Mathieu and Sylvain Bellenger, *Paris 1837: Vues de quelques monuments de Paris achevés sous le règne de Louis-Philippe 1^{er}, aquarelles de Félix Duban* (Paris: Alain de Gourcuff, 1999). See also David van Zanten, *Building Paris: Architectural Institutions and the Transformation of the French Capital, 1830–1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 95 ff.
23. Honoré de Balzac, *Œuvres complètes de Honoré de Balzac* (Paris: L. Conard, 1912–14), 17:61–62; cited in David H. Pinkney, *Napoleon III and the Rebuilding of Paris* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1958), 11.
24. Reproduced in van Zanten, *Building Paris*, 83.
25. Cited in *The Second Empire*, 61.
26. Théophile Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, ed. Claudine Lacoste-Veyseyre (Paris: Boîte à Documents, 1996), 140.
27. *Ibid.*, 149.
28. Quoted in Patricia Mainardi, *Art and Politics of The Second Empire* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987), 39.
29. Cited in Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 39. The accounts of the World’s Fairs of 1855 and 1867 in this essay closely follow Mainardi’s excellent history and analysis.
30. 1798, 1801, 1802, 1806, 1819, 1823, 1827, 1834, 1839, 1844, 1849. *Ibid.*, 17.
31. See Mainardi’s complete account: *ibid.*, 39–47.
32. Eugene Delacroix, *Journal d’Eugene Delacroix* (Paris: Plon, 1932), 2:153, entry of March 24, 1854.
33. Charles Baudelaire, *Curiosités esthétiques* (Paris: Bordas, 1990), 215.
34. *Ibid.*, 227.
35. Delacroix, *Journal*, 2:331, entry for June 1, 1855.
36. Recounted by Alexander Dumas in *Le Mousquetaire*, June 10, 1855, 360; quoted in Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 53–54.
37. Maxime Du Camp, *Les Beaux Arts à l’exposition universelle de 1855* (Paris, 1855), 94–115; quoted in *Delacroix: Les Dernières Années* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1998), 101.
38. Théophile Gautier, *Moniteur universelle*, July 25, 1855; quoted in *Delacroix*, 101.
39. Charles Baudelaire, *Le Pays*, May 26 and June 3, 1855; quoted in *Delacroix*, 101.
40. Frank Anderson Trapp, *The Attainment of Delacroix* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), 298.
41. See Andrew Carrington Shelton, “The Critical Reception of Ingres’s Portraits (1802–1855),” in *Portraits by Ingres: Image of an Epoch*, ed. Gary Tinterow and Philip Conisbee (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1999), 509.
42. This account was given in a letter of late 1853 or early 1854 from Courbet to his patron Bruyas; quoted in Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 57–59.
43. See the analysis by Linda Nochlin in “The Invention of the Avant-Garde” *Art News Annual* 34 (1968): 14.

44. From a letter from Courbet to Champfleury of January 1855, quoted by Benedict Nicholson in *Courbet: The Studio of the Painter* (London: Allen Lane, 1973), 13.
45. Delacroix, *Journal*, entry for August 3, 1855.
46. Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976), 2:586.
47. Edmond About, *Voyage à travers l'Exposition des beaux-arts* (Paris, 1855), 215–16.
48. Baudelaire, *Œuvres complètes*, 2:661–62.
49. Quoted in Etienne Moreau-Nélaton, *Corot* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1913), 48.
50. About, *Voyage*, 217–18.
51. Alfred Sensier, *Souvenirs sur Théodore Rousseau* (Paris, 1872), 213–14.
52. *Ibid.*, 224.
53. Baudelaire, “Salon de 1859,” in *Œuvres complètes*, 2:660.
54. Charles Blanc, “Salons de 1866,” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 21 (1866): 41.
55. Baudelaire, “Salon de 1859,” 2:616.
56. *Ibid.*, 2:617.
57. *Ibid.*, 2:618.
58. “Rapports du jury mixte international publiés sous la direction de S.A.I. le prince Napoléon,” 1856, 1233–43; reproduced in André Rouillé, *La Photographie en France* (Paris: Macula, 1989), 189.
59. Ernest Lacan, *Esquisses photographiques* (Paris, 1856), 47.
60. *Ibid.*, 29–30.
61. This account is adapted from my essay on this portrait in *The Grenville Winthrop Collection* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2002).
62. “Goliath réussi, élégant et poli, l’œil plein de douceur.” Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for January 3, 1863.
63. Although traditionally this pose has been identified with the painting by Titian (Musée du Louvre, inv. 757), the reference is inexact (see Fernande Goldschmidt et al., *Le Comte de Nieuwerkerke: Art et pouvoir sous Napoléon III*. [Musée National du Château de Compiègne, 2000], 81). Titian’s portrait is, by Renaissance standards, informal and accessible; Ingres’s *Nieuwerkerke* is quite the opposite. Among paintings at the Louvre, the closest match to Ingres’s *Nieuwerkerke* is Rigaud’s *Louis XIV* (Musée du Louvre, inv. 7492), and if this was Ingres’s intention, the message is unmistakable.
64. Cited in Daniel Ternois, *Lettres d’Ingres à Marcotte d’Argenteuil: Dictionnaire* (Nogent-le-Roi, France: Librairie des Arts et Métiers, 2001), 63.
65. Letter by Nieuwerkerke, in Hans Naef, *Die Bildniszeichnungen von J.-A.-D. Ingres* (Bern: Benteli, 1977–80), 3:536–37.
66. See Ternois, *Lettres*, 63.
67. Reprinted in Naef, *Die Bildniszeichnungen von J.-A.-D. Ingres*, 3:538–41.
68. Letter from Ingres to Calamatta, late 1863; published in Ternois, *Lettres*, 93.
69. In French, “tail,” *la queue*, is slang for “penis.”
70. Flandrin wrote Ingres in September 1863 to convey his dismay at the hanging. Eric Bertin, “Ingres: D’Après les lettres reçues de contemporaines illustres,” *Bulletin du Musée Ingres*, no. 71 (April 1998): 28.
71. There is disagreement over the actual figure, with numbers ranging from 2,783, cited in Françoise Cachin, *Manet* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1983), 165, to Albert Boime’s estimate of approximately 70 percent refused—which would amount to 3,500 rejected and 1,500 accepted—in “The Salon des Refusés and the Evolution of Modern Art,” *Art Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (1969): 416. What is perhaps most interesting is that the very fact of the Salon des Refusés has caused us to place the emphasis on the number of works refused, rather than the number accepted, which is easily determined by the catalog: 2,217.
72. Cited by Daniel Wildenstein, “Salon des Refusés de 1863: Catalogue et Documents,” *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, 6th ser., no. 66 (September 1965): 128.
73. Louise Clément-Carpeaux, *La Vérité sur l’œuvre et la vie de J.-B. Carpeaux* (Paris: Dousset et Bigerelle, 1934–35), 1:78.
74. Emile Zola, *Le Bon Combat: Anthologie d’écrits sur l’art* (Paris: Hermann, 1974), 96.
75. Zola, “Nos Peintres au Champs-de-Mars,” *ibid.*, 96–97.
76. Emile Zola, *L’Œuvre* [1886], trans. Thomas Walton (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1993), 130.
77. *Ibid.* 431.
78. Antonin Proust, “Edouard Manet: Souvenirs,” *La Revue blanche*, February–May 1897, 171–72. It seems clear now that Proust altered the circumstances in the retelling, in order to privilege the role that outdoor painting, which became the symbol of advanced art in the 1870s, may have had for Manet in the 1860s. Degas scoffed at this account when he read Proust’s memoirs in the late 1890s. See Cachin, *Manet*, 166.
79. Three-quarters of the jury was elected by exhibiting artists who had previously won medals; one quarter was appointed by the administration, i.e. Nieuwerkerke. This meant that the artists who elected the jury were themselves not subject to the jury, whereas artists who had never won awards were judged by those who had. The Salon rules may be found in Jane Mayo Roos, *Early Impressionism and the French State, 1866–1874* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 14–17.
80. In 1864, 2,710 works were accepted and 529 works were deemed inferior, of which 375 appeared in a new, and final, Salon des Refusés; it did not earn the notoriety of the previous years’ Refusés, because the most controversial artists had been accepted. In 1865 there was no Refusés, but 3,559 works were accepted by the lenient jury.
81. Maxime Du Camp, “Le Salon de 1864,” in *Les Beaux arts*, 119; cited in Joseph Sloane, *French Painting between the Past and the Present* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1973), 172.
82. *Etudes Baudelairiennes* (Neuchâtel) 3 (1973): 233–34.
83. Charles Baudelaire, *Correspondance générale*, ed. Jacques Crépet (Paris: L. Conard, 1947–53), 5:96–97 (May 11, 1865).
84. See T. J. Clark’s helpful analysis of the critical reception in *The Painting of Modern Life: Paris in the Art of Manet and his Followers*, rev. ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 79–147.
85. Quoted in Marie Thérèse de Forges, *Gustave Courbet* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978), 41.
86. Victor Fournel in *Le Correspondant*, April 1867, n.p.; cited in Arthur Chandler, “Empire of Autumn: The Paris Exposition Universelle of 1867,” <http://charon.sfsu.edu/PARISEXPOSITIONS/1867.html>.
87. *Rapport sur l’Exposition Universelle de 1867 à Paris* (Paris, 1869), 164; cited in Chandler, “Empire of Autumn.”
88. Paul Mantz, “Les Beaux Arts à l’Exposition Universelle,” *Gazette des Beaux arts*, July 1, 1867, 7; cited in Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 131.
89. Various figures are cited. Paul Greenhalg (*Ephemeral Vistas: The Exposition Universelles, Great Exhibitions, and World’s Fairs, 1851–1939* [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988]) gives twelve million; Erik Mattie (*World’s Fairs* [Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998]) gives 6,800,000. Arthur Chandler, in “Empire of Autumn,” gives the official figure as 9,062,965 paid admissions and approximately 11,000,000 total.

90. Greenhalg, *Ephemeral Vistas*, 37.
91. John Allwood, *The Great Exhibitions* (London: Studio Vista, 1977), 43.
92. Victor Hugo, introduction to *Paris—Guide de l'Exposition Universelle de 1867* (Paris: Lacroix, 1867).
93. *Ibid.*, 41.
94. Hippolyte Gautier, *Les Curiosités de l'Exposition Universelle, 1867* (Paris: Delagrave, 1867), 79; cited in *Le Livre des Expositions universelles, 1851–1889* (Paris: Union Centrale des Arts, 1983), 54.
95. Eugene Rimmel, *Recollections of the Paris Exhibition of 1867* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1868), 121.
96. The medal cabinet exhibited in 1867 is now at the Musée d'Orsay, Paris; a closely related cabinet, kept by Diehl for himself, is now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.
97. See Colombe Samoyault-Verlet in *The Second Empire*, 74–76.
98. This is Mainardi's analysis in *Art and Politics*, 131.
99. Anonymous, in *Art Journal*, May 1, 1867, 131; cited in Elizabeth Gilmore Holt, ed., *The Art of All Nations, 1850–73: The Emerging Role of Exhibitions and Critics* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1982), 483.
100. Théophile Thoré, "L'Exposition universelle de 1867," in *Les Salons de W. Bürger, 1861 à 1868* (Paris: Vve J. Renouard, 1870), 2:344.
101. *Ibid.*
102. Philippe Burty, "Exposition de la Société des amis des arts de Bordeaux" (review of an 1868 exhibition in Bordeaux), *Gazette des beaux-arts* 24 (May 1, 1868): 496–500. Cited in *The Second Empire*, 346.
103. Jules Castagnary, "Le Monde Artistique," *La Liberté*, April 1, 1867; cited in Mainardi, *Art and Politics*, 135.
104. Frédéric Bazille, *Correspondance* (Montpellier: Presses du Languedoc, 1992), 137.
105. Courbet to Bruyas, February 18, 1867; in Pierre Borel, *Lettres de Gustave Courbet à Alfred Bruyas* (Geneva: Pierre Cailler, 1951), 123.
106. Gaston Poulain, *Bazille et ses amis* (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 1932), 81.
107. Roos, *Early Impressionism*, 79.
108. Daniel Wildenstein, *Claude Monet: Catalogue raisonné et biographie* (Lausanne: Institut Wildenstein, 1974), 1:424, letter 33.
109. Henri Loyrette and Gary Tinterow, *Origins of Impressionism* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1994), 319.
110. Letter of January 2, 1867; cited in Juliet Wilson-Bareau, *Manet by Himself* (London: Macdonald, 1991), 41.
111. Anne Coffin Hanson, *Manet and the Modern Tradition* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 44.
112. The suicide note was published in *Le Journal illustré*, April 29–May 6, 1866, and reprinted in Roos, *Early Impressionism*, 62. Many have suggested that the case of Holtzappel was used by Zola in the creation of his character Claude Lantier. See Robert J. Niess, *Zola, Cézanne, and Manet: A Study of L'Œuvre* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1968).
113. Paul Mantz, "Exposition du boulevard des Italiens," *Gazette des beaux arts*, April 1, 1863, 383.
114. Marius Chaumelin, cited in Loyrette and Tinterow, *Origins of Impressionism*, 410.
115. Claude [Emile Zola], "Mon Salon, IV: M. Manet," May 7, 1867; reprinted in Holt, *The Art of All Nations*, 469–71.
116. *Ibid.*, 472.
117. Monet quoted in duc de Trévise, "Le Pélerinage de Giverny," *Revue de l'art* 51 (February 1927): 122.
118. Monet quoted in François Thiébault-Sisson, interview with Claude Monet, *Le Temps* (Paris), Nov. 27, 1900, 3.
119. Emile Zola, "Mon Salon: Les Actualistes," 1868, in Zola, *Ecrits sur l'art* (Paris: Gallimard, 1991), 209.
120. One conventional seascape by Monet was accepted in 1868, but the remainder of his submissions were rejected.
121. Jules Castagnary, *Salons, 1857–1870* (Paris: Charpentier-Fasquelle, 1892), 254.
122. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for May 27, 1867.
123. Marc Elder, *A Giverny: Chez Claude Monet* (Paris: Bernheim-Jeune, 1924), 64.
124. "Le Public—Les Artistes," *Le Salon quotidien*, May 3, 1863; cited in Geneviève Lacambre, *Japonisme* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1988), 74.
125. Jules Champfleury, "Les Modes des japonaiseries," *La Vie parisienne*, November 21, 1868, 863.
126. Ernest Chesneau, "Le Japon à Paris," *Gazette des Beaux Arts*, September 1, 1878, 387.
127. Monet to Bazille, December 1868; cited in Wildenstein, *Claude Monet*, 426.
128. This discussion is based on my notice on this picture in Loyrette and Tinterow, *Origins of Impressionism*, 247, 433–34, and my discussion of *japonisme* is likewise based on my essay "The Impressionist Landscape" in the same book.
129. René Gimpel, *Journal d'un collectionneur, marchand de tableaux* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1963), 178.
130. See Jean-Paul Bouillon et al., *Art, industrie et japonisme: Le Service Rousseau* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux), 1988.
131. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for March 31, 1878.
132. Théodore Duret, introduction to *Le Peintre Claude Monet* (Paris: La Vie Moderne, 1880), 7–9.
133. Chesneau, "Le Japon à Paris," 386–87.
134. "Sapristi, c'est cela qui nous donne raison. Il y a des soleils couchant gris qui sont d'un impressionnisme épatant." Camille Pissarro, *Correspondance*, ed. Janine Bailly-Herzberg (Paris: Editions du Valhermeil, 1988), 3, letters 869, 870, 308–9.
135. Haussmann left three volumes of memoirs, which have recently been reprinted. The first volume treats his family history and career as an administrator in the Var and Bordeaux. The second volume, the best known, recounts his experience as Préfet de la Seine under Napoleon III. The third volume, published posthumously, includes biographical notes on the architects and engineers with whom he worked. Haussmann, *Mémoires*, ed. Françoise Choay (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 2001).
136. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for January 16, 1867.
137. Napoléon III sacrificed the controversial prefect during the government shakeup in early 1870.
138. Jules Ferry, *Les Comptes fantastiques d'Haussmann* [1868] (Paris: Editions de la Vilette, 2000). See also Jean de Cars and Pierre Pinon, *Paris-Haussmann* (Paris: Pavillon de l'Arsenal, 1991).
139. Goncourt and Goncourt, *Journal*, entry for November 18, 1860. As T. J. Clark noted, Edmond de Goncourt modified this passage in 1891 to read: "I am a stranger . . . to these new boulevards without turnings, without chance perspectives, implacable in their straight lines, which no longer smack of the world of Balzac, which make one think of some American Babylon of the future." See Clark, *Painting of Modern Life*, 273 (notes).

140. A. des Cilleuls, *Histoire de l'administration parisienne au XIX^e siècle* (Paris, 1900), 2:208; cited in David H. Pinkney, *Napoléon III and the Rebuilding of Paris* (1958; reprint, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1972), 3. Pinkney's study remains the best on the subject of Napoleon and Haussmann; my remarks are modeled on his.
141. Pinkney, *Napoleon III*, 25.
142. Ibid.
143. Ibid., 44.
144. Haussmann, *Mémoires*; cited in van Zanten, *Building Paris*, 238.
145. François Loyer, *Paris Nineteenth Century: Architecture and Urbanism*, trans. Charles Lynn Clark (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988), 118.
146. Here I follow David van Zanten's entries in *The Second Empire*, 40–42, and the more detailed chapter, "Haussmann, Baltard, and Municipal Architecture," in his excellent *Building Paris*, 198–255.
147. Haussmann, *Mémoires*, 3:479, quoted by van Zanten in *The Second Empire*, 41.
148. Ibid., 480.
149. Proust, "Edouard Manet," 27; cited in Loyrette and Tinterow, *Origins of Impressionism*, 290.
150. Rambuteau created the Grandes Boulevards and planted them with trees. Haussmann decided to plant all streets wider than sixty-five feet (20 meters) with trees, the rue de Rennes and the avenue de l'Opéra being the two exceptions: this came to 95,577 trees. Marc Gaillard, *Paris au XIX^e siècle* (Paris: F. Nathan, 1981), 64.
151. Walter Benjamin, *Charles Baudelaire, un poète lyrique à l'apogée du capitalisme* (Paris: Payot, 1982), 58.
152. In fact, it had 1954 seats. Victor Fournel, *Paris dans sa splendeur* (Paris: H. Charpentier, 1863), 2:7.
153. Stanley Sadie, ed., *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 2000), 14:211.
154. *Journal officiel*, March 15, 1870.
155. *New Grove Dictionary of Music*, 14:211.
156. See discussion in Gary Tinterow et al., *Corot* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1996), 288–91.
157. November 14, 1858. Christopher Curtis Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra: Architectural Empathy and the Renaissance of French Classicism* (New York: Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1991), 55.
158. Chaix d'Est-Ange, "Avis de la Commission d'Enquête," 29; cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 57.
159. From Walewski's official decree; cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 60.
160. February 11, 1861; reprinted in Théophile Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, ed. Claudine Lacoste-Veyseyre (Paris: Boîte à documents, 1996), 1996, 156.
161. David van Zanten in *The Second Empire*, 70.
162. Cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 78.
163. Recounted by Louise Garnier; cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 78.
164. Théophile Gautier, May 13, 1863; reprinted in Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, 157.
165. David van Zanten in *The Second Empire*, 50.
166. May 13, 1863, reprinted in Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, 157.
167. Charles Garnier, *Le Théâtre* (Paris, 1871), 49–50.
168. Ibid., p. 59.
169. *Le Moniteur universel*, May 20, 1863; cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 127.
170. Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 132.
171. Letter of Napoleon III to Vaillant, July 31, 1864, published in *Le Moniteur universel*, August 2, 1864; cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 141.
172. August 7, 1867; in Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, 164.
173. August 7, 1867; *ibid.*, 166.
174. Charles Garnier, *Le Nouvel Opéra de Paris* (Paris, 1878–81), 1:9.
175. Ibid., 11.
176. Garnier to Louis Dutouquet, December 23, 1863; cited by Anne Pinget in *The Second Empire*, 216.
177. Garnier, *Nouvel Opéra de Paris* 1:434.
178. August 2, 1869; reprinted in Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, 168–69.
179. Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 190.
180. August 7, 1867; reprinted in Gautier, *Paris et les Parisiens*, 166.
181. Recounted by Louise Garnier, "Charles Garnier," *L'Architecture* 38 (1925): 382; cited in Mead, *Charles Garnier's Paris Opéra*, 3. Many scholars consider this episode apocryphal.
182. Louise Garnier, "Charles Garnier."
183. Quoted in Martine Kahane, *Le Foyer de la Danse* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1988), 12.
184. Ibid., 38.
185. Ibid., 41.
186. Nérée Desarbres, *Sept ans à l'Opéra*, 12; cited in *ibid.*, 24.
187. See Michael Pantazzi's entry in Jean Sutherland Boggs et al., *Degas* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1988), 280–84.
188. Garnier, *Nouvel Opéra de Paris*, 1:53–54.
189. For a summary of events leading up to the Franco-Prussian War, see Robert Tombs, *France, 1814–1914* (London: Longman, 1996), 422–24.
190. Ibid., 424.
191. On the conditions during the siege, see Robert Tombs, *The Paris Commune 1871* (London: Longman, 1999), 50–56.
192. Ibid., 51–52.
193. Thiers had first used this phrase in 1850 in response to the 1848 Revolution. See Tombs, *France*, 426.
194. My summary of the events of the Commune are taken from Stewart Edwards, *The Paris Commune, 1871* (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1971); and Tombs, *Paris Commune*.
195. See Tombs, *Paris Commune*, 75.
196. Jules Vallès, *Le Cri du peuple*, March 28, 1871; cited in *ibid.*, 75.
197. See Tombs, *Paris Commune*, 72–108, for a cautious, balanced discussion of this controversial issue.
198. On the limited social reforms undertaken during the Commune, see Edwards, *Paris Commune*, 249–176 and 351–66.
199. Tombs, *Paris Commune*, 10.
200. Courbet's proposal is reprinted in Roos, *Early Impressionism*, 260, n. 10.
201. See Edwards, *Paris Commune*, 302–3, for a description of the festivities surrounding the destruction of the column.
202. Ibid., 327.
203. Ibid.
204. Ibid., 326.
205. Ibid., 324.

206. M. de Villemessant, "Entreprise générale de balayage parisien," *Le Figaro*, June 8, 1871; cited in Albert Boime, *Art and the French Commune: Imagining Paris after War and Revolution* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 67.
207. See Quentin Bajac, *La Commune photographiée* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2000).
208. Théophile Gautier, *Tableaux de siècle: Paris, 1870–1871* (Paris: Charpentier, 1870), 327; quoted in Alisa Luxenberg, "Creating *Désastres*: Andrieu's Photographs of Urban Ruins in the Paris of 1871," *Art Bulletin* 80, no. 1 (March 1988): 119.
209. See Kirk Varnedoe, "The Tuileries Museum and the Uses of Art History in the Early Third Republic," in *Saloni, gallerie, musei et loro influenza sullo sviluppo dell'arte dei secoli XIX et XX*, ed. Francis Haskell, 24th Congresso Internazionale di Storia dell'Arte, 7 (Bologna: C.L.U.E.B., 1979), 63–68.
210. On the debates surrounding the reconstruction of the Hôtel de Ville and the eventual rebuilding of the structure, see the various essays in Béatrix de Buffévent, *Livre du centenaire de la reconstruction de l'Hôtel de Ville, 1882–1982* (Paris: Ville de Paris, Bibliothèque Administrative, 1982).
211. For the latest recounting of Courbet's activities during the Commune—including his role in the Vendôme column affair—see Laurence des Cars, *Courbet et la Commune* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 2000).
212. See Bertrand Tillier, "Courbet, Commune, colonne: Le Peintre déboulonné par la caricature," in *ibid.*, 81–99.
213. Rodolphe Walter, "Un Dossier délicat: Courbet et la Colonne Vendôme," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, March 1968, 181.
214. For a convenient overview of the Impressionists' activities during 1870–71, see Boime, *Art and the French Commune*, 46–59. Unfortunately, a more recent work, Hollis Clayson, *Paris in Despair: Art and Everyday Life under Siege* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), appeared too late for its findings to be incorporated into the present text.
215. See the catalog entry for this print by Juliet Wilson-Bareau in Cachin, *Manet*, 327.
216. The basic composition of the print derives from an earlier lithograph of the execution of Emperor Maximilian by Mexican freedom fighters in 1867. See Juliet Wilson-Bareau, *Manet: The Execution of Maximilian—Painting, Politics and Censorship* (London: National Gallery Publications, 1992).
217. For an analysis of this picture and of Meissonier's activities during the war, see Constance Cain Hungerford, *Ernest Meissonier: Master in His Genre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 137–44.
218. See Peter Fusco, "Falguière, the Female Nude, and 'La Résistance,'" *Los Angeles County Museum of Art Bulletin* 23 (1977): 36–50.
219. For the circumstances surrounding the commissioning of the monument, see Catherine Chevillot, *Emmanuel Fremiet, 1824–1910* (Dijon, France: Musée des Beaux-Arts, 1988), 128.
220. See Pierre Angrand, "Une—ou deux—Jeanne d'Arc sur la place des Pyramides?" *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, 6th ser., 77, nos. 1228–29 (May–June 1971): 344. This interpretation departs radically from Madame Chevillot's contention that the statue was devoid of political significance when it was initially unveiled; see Chevillot, *Emmanuel Fremiet*, 44–46. The initial aesthetic assessment of Fremiet's sculpture was centered upon what many considered to be its faulty proportions. The artist was so disturbed by these criticisms that, when the sculpture had to be temporarily removed from the place des Pyramides during the construction of the first subway line in 1899, he secretly replaced the original work with a second sculpture cast at his own expense in which the proportions were corrected. See Angrand, "Une—ou deux—Jeanne d'Arc," 346–52, and Chevillot, *Emmanuel Fremiet*, 129, for the minor scandal this initiative unleashed.
221. An excerpt from the letter of this would-be benefactor is reproduced in Angrand, "Une—ou deux—Jeanne d'Arc," 345–46.
222. For a convenient overview of the principal political developments of the 1870s, see Tombs, *France*, 435–42.
223. See Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris: An Architectural History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 105–17, for the general architectural stagnation of the 1870s and 1880s, during which time most of the major building projects carried out in Paris were simply continuations of work left unfinished by Haussmann.
224. See the definitive study of the monument, Jacques Benoist, *Le Sacré-Cœur de Montmartre de 1870 à nos jours*, 2 vols. (Paris: Editions Ouvrières, 1992).
225. See Marie Jeannine Aquilino, "Painted Promises: The Politics of Public Art in Late Nineteenth-Century France," *Art Bulletin* 75, no. 4 (December 1993): 697–712, for a recent discussion of the social and political implications this campaign.
226. As quoted in Pierre Vaisse, "La Peinture monumentale au Panthéon sous la III^e République," in Barry Bergdoll et al., *Le Panthéon: Symbole des révolutions* (Montreal: Centre Canadien d'Architecture, 1988), 252.
227. See Roos, *Early Impressionism*, 1–17, 33–48, and 131–46, for a detailed analysis of the ongoing struggle over the makeup of the admissions jury during the last decade of the Empire.
228. See Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, 42.
229. *Ibid.*, 42.
230. See Charles Baudelaire, "The Salon of 1846," in Charles Baudelaire, *Selected Writings on Art and Artists*, trans. P. E. Charvet (Middlesex, England: Penguin Books, 1972), 97–100.
231. See Roos, *Early Impressionism*, 43 and 104–5, for the sculptural installations in the Palais de l'Industrie.
232. See Peter Fusco's catalog entry on this work in Fusco and Janson, *Romantics to Rodin*, 303–5.
233. On the genesis and exhibition history of this work, see John L. Tancock, *The Sculpture of Auguste Rodin: The Collection of the Rodin Museum, Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1976), 342–53.
234. On the "Petit Ecole," see Anne Middleton Wagner, *Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux: Sculptor of the Second Empire* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1986), 46–62.
235. In Rodin's original design, the figure supported a spear in his still-upraised left hand and wore a fillet in his hair. The artist ultimately dispensed with these props in choosing to generalize the significance of the work; see Tancock, *Sculpture of Auguste Rodin*, 344.
236. See Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, 61–62, and, for a more general assessment of the artistic reforms undertaken by the successive Republican regimes of the late 1870s and 1880s, Michael R. Orwicz, "Anti-Academicism and State Power in the Early Third Republic," *Art History* 14, no. 4 (December 1991): 571–92.
237. Mainardi, *End of the Salon*, 82.
238. On the failed 1883 Triennale, see *ibid.*, 91–118.
239. For the most authoritative account of the history of the prostitute in late nineteenth-century France and her place in the collective consciousness of the nation, see Alain Corbin, *Women for Hire*. The remarks that follow are indebted to this source.
240. The most important analyses of literary and artistic representations of prostitution in late-nineteenth-century France are Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute*, and Hollis Clayson, *Painted Love: Prostitution in French Art of the Impressionist Era* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991).

241. Titles cited in Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute*, 167.
242. Although Zola's *Nana* was not published in serialized form until the autumn of 1878, its eponymous character had made her debut in the final installments of *L'Assommoir*, which first appeared in the autumn of 1876. See Françoise Cachin's catalog entry in Cachin, *Manet*, 392–95.
243. See Robert Herbert, *Impressionism: Art and Leisure in Parisian Society* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988), 113.
244. See Françoise Cachin's catalog entry in Cachin, *Manet*, 479.
245. For a sampling of recent art historical responses to the picture, see Bradford Collins, ed., *Twelve Views of Manet's "Bar"* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1996).
246. See Michael Pantazzi's catalog entry for this work in Boggs et al., *Degas*, 286–88.
247. See Barnaby Conrad III, *Absinthe: History in a Bottle* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1988).
248. Such was the opinion of the critic George Moore when the work was exhibited in London in 1893; see Theresa Ann Gronberg, "Femmes de Brasserie," *Art History* 7, no. 3 (September 1984): 329–30.
249. Herbert, *Impressionism*, 74.
250. See Clayson, *Painted Love*, 108, for a sustained discussion of this gesture.
251. Herbert, *Impressionism*, 45.
252. On Degas's interest in physiognomy and his employment of what was conventionally regarded as degraded facial types in his images of working-class women, see Douglas W. Druick and Peter Zegers, "Scientific Realism: 1793–1881," in Boggs et al., *Degas*, 205–7.
253. The monotypes are cataloged in Eugenia Parry Janis, *Degas Monotypes: Essay, Catalogue and Checklist* (Cambridge, Mass.: Fogg Art Museum, 1968), nos. 62–118. The most penetrating analyses of the series are found in Clayson, *Painted Love*, 27–55, and Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute*, 157–98.
254. See Corbin, *Women for Hire*, 78, for the tradition of observing the name day of the madame in French brothels.
255. For recent art historical takes on this controversial issue, see Norma Broude, "Degas's 'Misogyny,'" *Art Bulletin* 59, no. 1 (March 1977): 95–107, and Carol M. Armstrong, "Edgar Degas and the Representation of the Female Body," in *The Female Body in Western Culture*, ed. Susan R. Suleiman (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), 223–42.
256. See Bernheimer, *Figures of Ill Repute*, 166–95, for the most thoughtful analysis of the extent to which Degas's brothel monotypes resist the conventional objectification of the female body.
257. A definitive history of alternative exhibitions in nineteenth-century France remains to be written. For a basic overview of the topic, see Jon Whiteley, "Exhibitions of Contemporary Painting in London and Paris 1760–1860," in Haskell, *Saloni, gallerie, musei*, 69–87; and William Hauptman, "Juries, Protests and Counter-Exhibitions before 1850," *Art Bulletin* 67, no. 1 (March 1985): 95–109.
258. Harrison C. White and Cynthia A. White, *Canvases and Careers: Institutional Change in the French Painting World*, rev. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
259. The literature on the Impressionist exhibitions is, of course, enormous. What follows relies on the classic narrative account found in Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, and on the extremely useful essays and excerpts of contemporary criticism contained in Charles S. Moffett, *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886* (San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1986).
260. On the founding of the Société Anonyme and the preparation for its inaugural exhibition, see Paul Tucker, "The First Impressionist Exhibition in Context," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 104–6.
261. See *ibid.*, 106.
262. Etienne Carjat, "L'Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *Le Patriote français*, April 17, 1874; cited in Tucker, "First Impressionist Exhibition," 109. All the recovered criticism of the eight Impressionist exhibitions has recently been collected in Ruth Berson, *The New Painting: Impressionism, 1874–1886*, vol. 1, *Documents* (San Francisco: Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, 1996).
263. On the genesis of the term *Impressionism*, see Stephen F. Eisenman, "The Intransigent Artist; or, How the Impressionists Got Their Name," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 51–57.
264. Louis Leroy, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *Le Charivari*, April 25, 1874; cited in Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 320. Monet executed two paintings of the boulevard des Capucines in 1873; one is currently in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, while the other (see FIG. 6.52) is in the Nelson-Atkins Museum in Kansas City. It has never been determined which of these works was included in the 1874 exhibition.
265. Leroy, "Exposition des impressionnistes"; cited in Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 323.
266. The classic analysis of the iconography of works by female Impressionists is Griselda Pollock, "Modernity and the Spaces of Femininity," in Pollock, *Vision and Difference: Femininity, Feminism and the Histories of Art* (London: Routledge, 1988), 50–90.
267. See Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 334, where it is noted that the proceeds from the initial exhibition amounted to 10,222.40 francs—just over the 9,272.20 francs the group had incurred in expenses.
268. See Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 351–54.
269. My discussion of the critical reception of the 1876 exhibition is indebted to Hollis Clayson, "A Failed Attempt," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 147–57.
270. Louis-Emile-Edmond Duranty, "The New Painting: Concerning the Group of Artists Exhibiting at the Durand-Ruel Gallery," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 39.
271. See Emile Zola, "Deux expositions d'art en moi de mai," *Le Messager de l'Europe*, June 1876; and Stéphane Mallarmé, "The Impressionists and Edouard Manet," *Art Monthly Review and Photographic Portfolio* 1, no. 9 (September 30, 1876): 117–22. The latter essay is reprinted in full in Moffett, *New Painting*, 28–34.
272. See Herbert, *Impressionism*, for the most authoritative analysis of the role of leisure in Impressionist iconography.
273. See Clark, *Painting of Modern Life*, 185–95, for an analysis of the eradication of labor from Monet's landscapes produced at Argenteuil in the 1870s.
274. Georges Rivière, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes," *L'Impressioniste*, April 14, 1877; cited in Moffett, *New Painting*, 213.
275. See Ronald Pickvance, "Contemporary Popularity and Posthumous Neglect," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 244.
276. Jules Claretie, "La Vie à Paris: M. de Nittis et les impressionnistes," *Le Temps*, April 6, 1880; cited in Moffett, *New Painting*, 331.
277. Charles S. Moffett, "Disarray and Disappointment," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 302.
278. See Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 447–48.
279. For the most recent analysis of this sculpture and the reactions it elicited in 1881, see Richard Kendall, *Degas and the Little Dancer* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press; Omaha, Nebr.: Joslyn Art Museum, 1998).
280. *Ibid.*, 46.

281. Henry Trianon, "Sixième Exposition de peinture par un groupe d'artistes, 35, boulevard des Capucines," *Le Constitutionnel*, April 24, 1881; cited in Moffett, *New Painting*, 362.
282. See the excerpts of reviews in Moffett, *New Painting*, 362.
283. Elie de Mont, "L'Exposition du boulevard des Capucines," *La Civilisation*, April 21, 1881; cited in Moffett, *New Painting*, 362.
284. Paul Mantz, "Exposition des œuvres des artistes indépendants," *Le Temps*, April 23, 1881; cited in Moffett, *New Painting*, 362.
285. See Douglas W. Druick, "Framing *The Little Dancer Aged Fourteen*," in Kendall, *Degas and the Little Dancer*, 77–96.
286. See, for instance, Claretie, "La Vie à Paris," and Mantz, "Exposition des œuvres."
287. Cézanne's submissions to the 1882 Salon were, like all of his previous attempts, initially rejected; however, Antoine Guillemet, an established artist sympathetic to the Impressionist cause, orchestrated Cézanne's admission by making use of his prerogative as a member of the jury to have one of his students accepted without discussion. See Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 475.
288. See Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 464–67.
289. Joel Isaacson, "The Painters Called Impressionist," in Moffett, *New Painting*, 375.
290. Isaacson, "Painters Called Impressionist," 379–81. Most of the paintings in the 1882 exhibition by Renoir, who continued to exhibit at the Salon, came from the stock of Durand-Ruel, chief organizer of the event; see John House et al., *Renoir* (London: Hayward Gallery, 1985), 221.
291. See Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 481–82.
292. Martha Ward, "The Rhetoric of Independence and Innovation," in Moffett, 427.
293. From the decidedly no-nonsense title Degas gave the suite in the catalogue of the 1886 exhibition: "Suite de nuds [sic] de femmes se baignant, se lavant, se séchant, s'essuyant, se peignant ou se faisant peigner (Pastels)."
294. Degas, as quoted in Rewald, *History of Impressionism*, 525.
295. There has been considerable debate over the class affiliation(s) of the figures in the *Grande Jatte*. T. J. Clark (*Painting of Modern Life*, 261–67), claims the picture documents the uncomfortable intermingling of workers and the bourgeoisie in modern leisure-time activities; he thereby sees the picture as an attempt to give visual expression to class antagonisms under capitalism. More recently, Robert Herbert has argued that all the figures belong to the lower and middle registers of the bourgeoisie. He therefore sees the painting as a witty send-up of the contrivances of middle-class life; see Robert L. Herbert, *Georges Seurat, 1859–1891* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art and Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 176–78. As Martha Ward has recently pointed out, the critical reaction to the painting in 1886 would seem to support Herbert's conclusion; see Ward, "Rhetoric of Independence," 435.
296. See Linda Nochlin, "Seurat's *Grande Jatte*: An Anti-Utopian Allegory," *Museum Studies* 14, no. 2 (1989): 133–53.
297. Fèvre, "L'Exposition des impressionnistes"; cited in Herbert, *Seurat*, 177.
298. Paul Adam, "Peintures impressionnistes," *Revue contemporaine* 5 (April–May 1886); cited in Herbert, *Seurat*, 177. Adam's characterization of Seurat's drawing style as "primitive" was commonplace in 1886, when many critics compared the *Grande Jatte* to ancient Egyptian statuary and to early Renaissance art; see Herbert, *Seurat*, 174–75.
299. As Robert Herbert has pointed out in his masterful analysis of the technique of the *Grande Jatte*, the size and shape of its brush strokes are actually quite varied, although from a distance they tend to appear as more or less uniform dots; see Herbert, *Seurat*, 173.
300. For a contemporary articulation of the Neo-Impressionists' desire to move beyond the "instinct and instantaneity" of Impressionism, see Paul Signac, "From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism," in *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, 1874–1904*, ed. Linda Nochlin (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), 116–23.
301. Félix Fénéon, "The Impressionists in 1886 (Eighth Impressionist Exhibition)" in Nochlin, *Impressionism and Post-Impressionism*, 108–9.
302. As pointed out by Signac, "From Eugène Delacroix to Neo-Impressionism," 118–19.
303. See the critical commentary on the painting quoted in Bogomila Welsh-Ovcharov, ed., *Van Gogh à Paris* (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 1988), 302–3.
304. In the fall of 1887, van Gogh actually staged an exhibition devoted to the "Impressionists of the Petit Boulevard" in the Grand Bouillon-Du Chalet, a restaurant and dance-hall at number 43, avenue de Clichy; see Carol Zemel, *Van Gogh's Progress: Utopia, Modernity and Late-Nineteenth-Century Art* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1997), 187–89. For the various geographical and economic associations of van Gogh's use of the term *Petit Boulevard*, see Richard Thomson, "The Cultural Geography of the Petit Boulevard," in *Vincent van Gogh and the Painters of the Petit Boulevard*, ed. Cornelia Homburg (Saint Louis: Saint Louis Art Museum, 2001), 65–108.
305. The relevant excerpts from Dujardin's articles are reprinted in Henri Dorra, ed., *Symbolist Art Theories: A Critical Anthology* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 177–81.
306. See Welsh-Ovcharov, *Van Gogh*, 142–43, where van Gogh's tendency to exaggerate the size of the windmills in his views of Montmartre is noted.
307. On van Gogh's *japonisme*, see Fred Orton, "Vincent van Gogh in Paris, 1886–1887: Vincent's Interest in Japanese Prints," *Vincent* 1, no. 3 (1971): 2–12; and T. Kodera, "Japan as Primitivistic Utopia: Van Gogh's Japonisme Portraits," *Simiolus*, 1984, 189–208.
308. In 1890 van Gogh wrote, "What impassions me most—much, much more than all the rest of my métier—is the portrait, the modern portrait." Quoted in Zemel, *Van Gogh's Progress*, 87. For recent discussions of van Gogh as a portraitist, see the essays in *Van Gogh Face to Face: The Portraits* (Detroit: Detroit Institute of Arts, 2000).
309. See Zemel, *Van Gogh's Progress*, 186–87.
310. *Ibid.*, 201.
311. The portrait exists in two versions, the one illustrated here and another in the Niarchos Collection in London. For a summary of the debate regarding the relationship of the two canvases, see Welsh-Ovcharov, *Van Gogh*, 168.

CHAPTER VII

1. Debora L. Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France: Politics, Psychology and Style* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1989), 43–44.
2. Concerning the Eiffel Tower, see Joseph Harriss, *The Tallest Tower: Eiffel and the Belle Époque* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Gateway, 1975); Miriam R. Levin, *Republican Art and Ideology in Late-Nineteenth Century France* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1986), 41–45; and Miriam R. Levin, *When the Eiffel Tower Was New: French Visions of Progress at the Centennial of the Revolution* (South Hadley, Mass.: Mount Holyoke College Art Museum, 1989), 20–28.
3. François Fossier et al., *Henri Rivière, graveur et photographe* (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 1988), 62–79.

4. Alphand, in Caroline Mathieu et al., *1889: La Tour Eiffel et l'Exposition universelle* (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 1989), 223.
5. William Inness Homer, *Seurat and the Science of Painting* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1964).
6. Meyer Schapiro, "New Light on Seurat" (1958), reprinted in Schapiro, *Modern Art, Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: Selected Papers* (New York: George Braziller, 1978), 107-9.
7. Seurat, in Gustave Kahn, "Exposition Puvis de Chavannes," *Revue indépendante*, January 1888, 142-43.
8. Joan U. Halperin, *Félix Fénéon: Aesthete and Anarchist in Fin-de-Siècle Paris* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1988), 101-2.
9. My discussion of *Chahut* is indebted to Jean-Claude Lebensztein, *Chahut* (Paris: Hazan, 1989); Richard Thomson, *Seurat* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1985), 197-221; Robert L. Herbert with Françoise Cachin et al., *Georges Seurat, 1859-1891* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; Harry N. Abrams, 1991), 340-45; and Michael F. Zimmermann, *Seurat and the Art Theory of His Time* (Antwerp, Belgium: Fonds Mercator, 1991), 362-80.
10. Lebensztein, *Chahut*, 65.
11. Concerning anarchism and the Neo-Impressionist milieu, see John G. Hutton, *Neo-Impressionism and the Search for Solid Ground: Art, Science and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1994).
12. For an attempt at politicizing Pissarro's Paris, see Richard R. Brettell and Joachim Pissarro, *The Impressionist and the City: Pissarro's Series Paintings* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992), xxi-xxxv, 79-84.
13. Carolyn Lanchner et al., *Henri Rousseau* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1966), 106. The best work on Rousseau remains Roger Shattuck, *The Banquet Years* (New York: Random House, 1968), 45-112. The term *artiste-peintre* is used to distinguish a professional artist from the painter as a manual laborer.
14. Debora Silverman, "The Paris Exhibition of 1889: Architecture and the Crisis of Individualism," *Oppositions* 8 (spring 1977): 74. Also Mathieu et al., 1889, 164-95.
15. J.-K. Huysmans, "Le Fer," in *Certains* (Paris: Plon, 1889), 180.
16. A. de Baudot, *L'Architecture: Le Passé—Le Présent* (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1916), 143-44.
17. Charles Rearick, *Pleasures of the Belle Epoque: Entertainment and Festivity in Turn-of-the-Century France* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1985), 120. My discussion of the fair also draws on Rearick's overall treatment, 119-46.
18. See Mathieu et al., 1889, 130-61.
19. Mallarmé, in John Rewald, *Post-Impressionism: From van Gogh to Gauguin* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1978), 483.
20. For an overview of the Symbolist milieu, see André Billy, *L'Epoque 1900, 1885-1905* (Paris: Tallandier, 1951).
21. Ernest Raynaud, "Le Symbolisme et les cafés littéraires," *Mercure de France*, June 1, 1936, 284.
22. The classic treatment of Symbolism, primitivism, and theories of an "original language" are found in Feliz Eda Burhan, "Visions and Visionaries: Nineteenth-Century Psychological Theory, the Occult Sciences, and the Formation of the Symbolist Aesthetic in France" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1979), 172-259.
23. My discussion of Gauguin's primitivism is indebted to Kirk Varnedoe, "Gauguin," in William Rubin, *Primitivism in Twentieth-Century Art: Affinity of the Tribal and the Modern* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984), 1:179-209.
24. Richard Brettell et al., *The Art of Paul Gauguin* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1988), 317-21.
25. Van Gogh, in Rewald, *Post-Impressionism*, 76.
26. Aurier, *ibid.*, 368, 371. For Aurier and van Gogh, see P. T. Matthews, *Aurier's Symbolist Art Criticism and Theory* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1986), 12-14, 121-26.
27. For van Gogh's reputation in Paris and Bernard's claim, see Carol M. Zemel, *The Formation of a Legend: Van Gogh Criticism, 1890-1920* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1980), 59-104.
28. Vincent to Theo, early February 1890, *The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1978), 3:254.
29. Bourget, in Jean Pierrot, *The Decadent Imagination, 1880-1900* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 170-71.
30. J.-K. Huysmans, *Against Nature*, trans. Robert Baldick (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1959), 73.
31. Redon's description of the work, in Douglas W. Druick et al., *Odilon Redon: Prince of Dreams, 1840-1916* (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago; New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), 230.
32. Harriet K. Stratis, "Beneath the Surface: Redon's Methods and Materials," in *ibid.*, 368, 371-72.
33. Jean da Silva, *La Salon de la Rose + Croix (1892-1897)* (Paris: Syros-Alternatives, 1991), 20.
34. Edgar Munhall, *Whistler and Montesquiou: The Butterfly and the Bat* (New York: Frick Collection, 1995).
35. Montesquiou, in *ibid.*, 124.
36. Signac, in Daniel Imbert, "L'Hôtel de Ville de Paris: Genèse républicaine d'un grand décor," in Thérèse Burrollet et al., *Le Triomphe des mairies: Grandes Décors républicains à Paris, 1870-1914* (Paris: Musée du Petit Palais, 1986), 63.
37. Daniel Imbert, "Les Décors de l'Hôtel de Ville," *ibid.*, 345-55.
38. Georges Lafenestre, in *ibid.*, 389.
39. Achille Segard, *Peintres d'aujourd'hui: Les Decorateurs* (Paris: Paul Ollendorf, 1914), 1:46-59; and Imbert, "Décors de l'Hôtel de Ville," 315-16.
40. Camille Mauclair, *Albert Besnard: L'Homme et l'œuvre* (Paris: Delagrave, 1914), 25-32.
41. Felicien Champsaur, "Le Roi de l'affiche," *La Plume*, November 15, 1893, 481.
42. Bradford Ray Collins Jr., "Jules Chéret and the Nineteenth-Century French Poster" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1980), 118-19.
43. J.-K. Huysmans, "Chéret," in Huysmans, *Certains*, 53.
44. René Dubreuil, "Sur les 'femmes' de Jules Chéret," *La Plume*, November 15, 1893, 493-94.
45. Fernand Bournon, *La Voie publique et son décor* (Paris: H. Laurens, 1909), 184.
46. Ruth Mirolli, "Monuments for the Middle Class," in *Nineteenth-Century French Sculpture: Monuments for the Middle Class* (Louisville, Ky.: J. B. Speed Art Museum, 1971), 15-17.
47. John M. Hunisak, "Images of Workers: From Genre Treatment and Heroic Nudity to the Monument to Labor," in *The Romantics to Rodin*, ed. Peter Fusco and H. W. Janson (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1980), 56-60.
48. Daniel Rosenfeld, "Rodin's Carved Sculpture," in *Rodin Rediscovered*, ed. Albert Elsen (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1981), 90.

49. D. S. MacColl, in *Rodin: The Shape of Genius*, ed. Ruth Butler (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 356–57.
50. Albert Elsen, “The Gates of Hell” by Auguste Rodin (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1985), 151–58.
51. Rosalyn Frankel Jamison, “Rodin’s Humanization of the Muse,” in Elsen, *Rodin Rediscovered*, 113–14.
52. Rodin, in Elsen, *Rodin* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1963), 103.
53. On Rosso’s life and work, see Luciano Caramel, *Medardo Rosso: Impressions in Wax and Bronze* (New York: Kent, 1988).
54. Carrière, in Robert James Bantens, *Eugène Carrière: His Work and His Influence* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: UMI Research Press, 1983), 81.
55. Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 109–58.
56. Gabriel P. Weisberg, “S. Bing, Edvard Munch, and L’Art Nouveau,” *Arts Magazine* 61 (September 1986): 58–64.
57. Françoise-Thérèse Charpentier and Philippe Thiébaut, *Gallé* (Paris: Musée du Luxembourg, 1985); and Philippe Garner, *Emile Gallé* (New York: Rizzoli, 1976).
58. See chapter 13, “Art Nouveau in the Salon, II: *Psychologie Nouvelle* in the Works of Emile Gallé and Auguste Rodin,” in Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 229–42.
59. As Silverman has shown, the decorative-arts movement was feminized by the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs during the 1890s in exhibitions of “l’art de la femme,” which stressed the minor arts as a woman’s aesthetic domain (emphasis was placed on crafts that were associated with the artisanal and domestic role of women, from lace and embroidery to children’s clothing and hairstyles). *Ibid.*, 187–206.
60. Hahn, in Roger-Henri Guerrand, *L’Art Nouveau en Europe* (Paris: Plon, 1965), 167.
61. N. Grasset, *La Plante et ses applications ornementales* (Paris: Librairie Centrale des Beaux-Arts, 1897–99).
62. Margaret Haile Harris, *Loie Fuller: Magician of Light* (Richmond: Virginia Museum, 1979).
63. Marx, in Guerrand, *L’Art Nouveau*, 178.
64. Mallarmé, in Mary Ann Caws, “Dancing with Mallarmé and Seurat (and Loie Fuller, Hérodias and La Goulue),” in Peter Collier and Robert Lethbridge, *Artistic Relations: Literature and the Visual Arts in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1994), 294. For the “visual suggestibility of the unconscious,” see Silverman, *Art Nouveau*, 299–300.
65. Marx, in Franco Borsi and Ezio Godoli, *Paris 1900* (New York: Rizzoli, 1977), 196.
66. de Gourmont, in Philippe Julian, *The Triumph of Art Nouveau: Paris Exhibition 1900* (New York: Larousse and Co., 1974), 42.
67. Morand, *ibid.*, 94.
68. Frantz Jourdain, “L’Art dans la rue,” *Revue des arts décoratifs* 12 (1891–92): 211–14; Charles Saunier, “Esthétique de la rue et les architectes,” *Revue des arts décoratifs* 18 (1896): 65–71; Gustave Kahn, *L’Esthétique de la rue* (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1901); Emile Magne, “L’Esthétique de la rue,” *Mercure de France*, July 15, 1905, 161–81. For a recent history of this movement in general, see Meredith L. Clausen, *Frantz Jourdain and the Samaritaine: Art-Nouveau Theory and Criticism* (Leiden, the Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1987), 107–20.
69. Magne, “L’Esthétique de la rue,” 170, 174.
70. Garnier, in Roger-Henri Guerrand, *L’Aventure du métropolitain* (Paris: Editions la Découverte, 1986), 64.
71. The often-quoted description originated in Georges Bans, “Les Gares du Métropolitain à Paris,” *L’Art décoratif*, October 1900, 38.
72. Kahn’s vision of the modern street is set forth in “La Rue d’aujourd’hui,” part 2 of his *L’Esthétique de la rue*, 185–306.
73. Borsi and Godoli, *Paris 1900*, 215–16.
74. Bernard Marrey with Marie-Jeanne Dumont, *La Brique à Paris* (Paris: Editions du Pavillon de l’Arsenal, 1991), 98–99.
75. Anatole de Baudot, *L’Architecture: Le Passé—Le Présent* (Paris: Henri Laurens, 1916), 171.
76. Raymond Escholier, *Le Nouveau Paris* (Paris: Nilsson, 1913), 24–27.
77. Georges d’Avenel, *Le Mécanisme de la vie moderne* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1905), 5:203–19.
78. “Séance du vendredi 28 janvier 1898,” *Commission municipale du vieux Paris: Procès-Verbaux 1898* 1 (1899): 1–2.
79. Clausen, *Frantz Jourdain*, 126–28.
80. Although virtually unrecognized as an artistic body of work, Atger’s photographs caught the attention of Man Ray in 1926, by which time Atger had long been living a life of poverty and neglect. After Atger’s death in 1927, his large collection of images was purchased by the photographer Berenice Abbott; it was acquired by the Museum of Modern Art, New York, in 1968.
81. Marie de Thézy, *Charles Marville, photographe de Paris de 1851 à 1879* (Paris: La Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris, 1980); and Maria Morris Hambourg, “Charles Marville’s Old Paris,” in *Charles Marville: Photographs of Paris at the Time of the Second Empire on Loan from the Musée Carnavalet, Paris* (New York: French Institute/Alliance Française, 1981), 7–11.
82. Molly Nesbit, *Atger’s Seven Albums* (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1992), 15–18, 62–73.
83. See Eugène Hénard, *Etudes sur les transformations de Paris. Fascicule 4: Le Champ de Mars et la Galerie des Machines* (Paris: Librairies-Imprimeries Réunies, 1904); and Peter M. Wolf, *Eugène Hénard and the Beginning of Urbanism in Paris* (The Hague: Ando, 1968), 72–76.
84. François Loyer, *Paris XIX^e siècle: L’Immeuble et la rue* (Paris: Fernand Hazan, 1987), 407–20. See also René Jullian, *Histoire de l’architecture en France* (Paris: Philippe Sers, 1984), 19–37.
85. See Escholier, *Le Nouveau Paris*, 22–44; and François Goy-Truffaut, *Paris-façade* (Paris: Fernand Hazan, 1989).
86. François Loyer and Hélène Guéné, *Henri Sauvage: Les Immeubles à gradins* (Paris: Mardaga, 1987), 28–65.
87. Anthony Sutcliffe, *Paris: An Architectural History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 121–26.
88. For an overview of the various architectural styles that were considered for the Gare d’Orsay project, see Marie-Laure Crosnier Leconte, *Victor Laloux: L’Architecte de la gare d’Orsay* (Paris: Musée d’Orsay, 1987), 25–37.
89. Robert de La Sizeranne, “L’Art à l’exposition de 1900: L’Esthétique du fer,” *La Revue des deux-mondes*, May 1, 1900, 199–201.
90. “Le Pont Mirabeau,” by Guillaume Apollinaire, trans. Roger Shattuck, in *Selected Writings of Guillaume Apollinaire* (New York: New Directions Books, 1971), 65.
91. Denis, “Definition of Neotraditionism” (1890), in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 94. For the development of a “decorative” art within the Nabi and symbolist community, see Roger Benjamin, “The Decorative Landscape, Fauvism and the Arabesque of Observation,” *Art Bulletin* 75 (June 1993): 295–316.
92. Gloria Groom, *Edouard Vuillard, Painter-Decorator: Patrons and Projects, 1892–1912* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993), 58.

93. Susan J. Sidlauskas, "A 'Perspective of Feeling': The Expressive Interior in Nineteenth-Century Realist Painting" (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1989), 214–86. On Nabi involvement with theater, see also Geneviève Aitken, "Les Nabis, un foyer au théâtre," in Claire Frèches-Thory et al., *Nabis, 1888–1900* (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 1993), 399–406.
94. Marx, in Claire Frèches-Thory, "Les Nabis et les arts décoratifs," in Frèches-Thory et al., *Nabis, 1888–1900*, 372.
95. Sasha Newman, "'Stages of Sentimental Life': The Nudes and the Interiors," in Newman et al., *Félix Vallotton* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Art Gallery; New York: Abbeville Press, 1991), 139–42.
96. Elisa Evett, "The Late Nineteenth-Century European Critical Response to Japanese Art: Primitivist Leanings," *Art History* 6 (March 1983): 83–106. This article addresses the European perception of Japanese art as having derived from "childlike" cultural and perceptual conditions of visibility.
97. Gerard Damerval, *Ubu Roi: La Bombe comique de 1896* (Paris: A. G. Nizet, 1984).
98. Jarry, in *ibid.*, 241–42.
99. See Jerrold Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830–1930* (New York: Viking, 1986), especially chap. 8, "Publicity and Fantasy: The World of the Cabarets."
100. For crowd theory, see Susanna Barrows, *Distorting Mirrors: Visions of the Crowd in Late-Nineteenth Century France* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1981).
101. Marilyn McCully, "Magic and Illusion in the Saltimbanques of Picasso and Apollinaire," *Art History* 3 (December 1980): 425–34; see also John Richardson, *A Life of Picasso*, vol. 1, *1881–1906* (New York: Random House, 1991), 333–49.
102. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
103. Leo Stein, *Appreciation: Painting, Poetry and Prose* (New York: Crown, 1947), 158.
104. John Elderfield, *The Wild Beasts: Fauvism and Its Affinities* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1976), 68.
105. Jack Flam, *Matisse: The Man and His Art, 1869–1918* (Utica, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1986), 151–64.
106. Margit Rowell, "Brancusi: Timelessness in a Modern Mode," in Friedrich Teja Bach et al., *Constantin Brancusi, 1876–1957* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1995), 39–49.
107. Robert Rosenblum, "Picasso in Gosol: The Calm before the Storm," in Marilyn McCully, ed., *Picasso: The Early Years, 1892–1906* (Washington: National Gallery of Art; New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1997), 261ff.
108. Concerning Picasso's primitivism and its sources, see William Rubin et al., *Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. 1935)* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1994), a special issue of *Studies in Modern Art*.
109. Christopher Prendergast, *Paris and the Nineteenth Century (Writing the City)*, (Oxford: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 164–72.
110. David Cottington, "What the Papers Say: Politics and Ideology in Picasso's Collages of 1912," *Art Journal* 47 (winter 1988–89): 350–59.
111. Kenneth Silver, *Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War, 1914–1925* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989), 308–9.
112. Clausen, *Frantz Jourdain*, 261.
113. *Ibid.*, 20–22.
114. Michael B. Miller, *The Bon Marché: Bourgeois Culture and the Department Store, 1869–1920* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1981), 184–89.
115. Located on the boulevard des Capucines, the house and its contents have been preserved as a state museum.
116. Michel Steve, "Un Monument pastiche, le Musée Nissim de Camondo à Paris," *Histoire de l'Art*, no. 27 (October 1994): 63–69.
117. Jean-Michel Nectoux et al., *1913: Le Théâtre des Champs-Élysées* (Paris: Musée d'Orsay, 1987).
118. *Bakst* (London: Fine Arts Society, 1976), 6–10; and Marina Scriabine, "Réflexions sur l'esthétique de la vie quotidienne en 1913," in *L'Année 1913*, ed. Liliane Brion-Guerry (Paris: Klincksieck, 1971), 930–32.
119. For Doucet as a collector, see Gustave Babin, "La Maison d'un amateur au XIX siècle," *L'Illustration*, June 1, 1912, 475–82.
120. For Iribe, see Anne-Claude Lelieur et al., *Paul Iribe: Précurseur de l'Art Déco* (Paris: Bibliothèque Forney, 1983).
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122. Robert De La Sizeranne, in *Revue des deux-mondes*, 1897.
123. John Wood, *The Art of the Autochrome: The Birth of Color Photography* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1993).
124. See Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October*, no. 39 (winter 1986): 3–40; and Isabelle Sauvé-Astruc, "Une Existence en instantané: Le Procédé Bertillon," *Monuments Historiques*, no. 195 (March 1995): 73–76.
125. Donald Crafton, *Emile Cohl, Caricature and Film* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).
126. See Annette Michelson, "The Art of Moving Shadows," in *The Art of Moving Shadows* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 1989), 15–16.
127. Richard Abel, *The Ciné Goes to Town: French Cinema, 1896–1914* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1994), 181–82.
128. For these and other aspects of Feuillade's *Fantômas*, see Francis Lacassin, *Pour un contre-histoire du cinéma* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1972), 91–101.
129. For cubism and the imagery of words, see Robert Rosenblum, "Picasso and the Typography of Cubism," in *Picasso in Retrospect, 1881–1973*, ed. John Golding and Roland Penrose (New York: Praeger, 1973), 33–47. Regarding cubist typography and the broader avant-garde assimilation of commercial culture, see Kirk Varnedoe and Adam Gopnik, *High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1990), 23–67.
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131. Guillaume Apollinaire, "Die Moderne Malerei," *Der Sturm*, February 1913; for an English version, see *Apollinaire on Art: Essays and Reviews, 1902–1918*, ed. Leroy C. Breunig, trans. Susan Suleiman (New York: Viking Press, 1972), 269.
132. Sutcliffe, *Paris*, 125–26.
133. Apollinaire, "Zone," in *Selected Writings*, 117.
134. Roger Shattuck, "Apollinaire's Great Wheel," in *The Innocent Eye* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1984), 240–62.

135. Léger, "Les Origines de la peinture et sa valeur représentative," *Montjoie!* May 29, 1913; translated and reprinted in Edward F. Fry, *Cubism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), 124.
136. For cubism and science, pro and con, see Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983); and Maurice Raynal, "Montmartre au temps du Bateau-Lavoir," *Médecine de France* 25 (1952): 26. For the Puteaux cubists in a broader philosophical context related to the representation of temporal experience, see Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson: Cultural Politics and the Parisian Avant-Garde* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1993).
137. From Delaunay's notebooks of 1938, quoted in *The New Art of Color: The Writings of Robert and Sonia Delaunay*, ed. Arthur A. Cohen, trans. David Schapiro (New York: Viking Press, 1978), 14.
138. Cendrars, "The Eiffel Tower" (1924), in Cohen, *New Art of Color*, 173.
139. See the discussion of this picture in Kenneth Silver, *The Circle of Montparnasse: Jewish Artists in Paris, 1905-1945* (New York: Jewish Museum; Universe Books, 1985), 29-30.
140. Duchamp-Villon, "The Eiffel Tower," 1913, in William C. Agee and George Heard Hamilton, *Raymond Duchamp-Villon, 1876-1918* (New York: M. Knoedler, 1967), 115-16.
141. Freud, in Margaret Cohen, *Profane Illumination: Walter Benjamin and the Paris of Surrealist Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 83.
142. Reprinted in Breunig, *Apollinaire on Art*, 503. For the place de Rennes, see the anonymous item in *La Construction moderne*, April 19, 1914, 348.
143. Giorgio de Chirico, in Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco, "De Chirico in Paris," in *De Chirico*, ed. William S. Rubin (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982), 13.
4. From a private tape recording, quoted in Francis Steegmuller, *Jean Cocteau*, 1970; in Kenneth Silver, *The Circle of Montparnasse* (New York: Jewish Museum, 1985), 22.
5. Picasso, in Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler, *My Galleries and Painters*, trans. Helen Weaver (London: Thames & Hudson, 1971), 46.
6. Robert de La Sizeranne, *L'Art pendant la guerre, 1914-1918* (Paris: Hachette, 1919), 262.
7. The *Première Exposition futuriste d'art plastique de la guerre et d'autres œuvres antérieures* was held at the Galerie Boutet de Monville, January 15-February 2, 1916. See Severini's own account of the exhibition (and this period in general) in Severini, *The Life of a Painter*, trans. Jennifer Franchina (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 146-78.
8. *L'Art moderne en France*, July 1916.
9. Pierre Reverdy, "Essai d'esthétique littéraire," *Nord-Sud* 4-5 (June-July 1917): 4-6.
10. Apollinaire to Reverdy, June 1917, Guillaume Apollinaire, *Œuvres complètes* (Paris: A. Balland et J. Lecat, 1966), 4:890-91.
11. Jacob to Doucet, March 22, 1917, François Garnier, *Correspondance de Max Jacob* (Paris: Editions de Paris, 1953), 1:145-46.
12. Léger to Poughon, January 22, 1916, *Fernand Léger: Une Correspondance de guerre*, ed. Christian Derouet (Paris: Les Cahiers du Musée National d'Art Moderne, 1990), 53-54.
13. Elizabeth Louise Kahn, *The Neglected Majority: "Les Camoufleurs," Art History and World War I* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1984).
14. La Sizeranne, *L'Art pendant la guerre*, 252.
15. This is the theme of Kenneth Silver's influential book *L'Esprit de Corps: The Art of the Parisian Avant-Garde and the First World War* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press; London: Thames & Hudson, 1989).
16. Monet to Clemenceau, November 12, 1918, cited in André Worms, "Claude Monet et Georges Clemenceau: Une Singulière Amitié," in *Aspects of Monet*, ed. John Rewald and Frances Weitzenhoffer (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1984).
17. Monet to Gustave Geffroy, December 1914, Michael Hoog, *Les Nymphéas de Claude Monet au Musée de l'Orangerie* (Paris: Réunion des Musées Nationaux, 1984), 38.
18. Fernand Léger, "Sur la peinture," in Jean de Bosschère, ed., *L'Exposition 1937 et les artistes à Paris* (Paris: n.p., 1937), xx-xxix.
19. Paris was also the site (at Vincennes) of the *Exposition coloniale* in 1931—an important initiative that became a vehicle for French colonial propaganda. Its significance in relation to the visual arts is analyzed by Romy Golan in *Modernity and Nostalgia: Art and Politics in France Between the Wars* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1995), chap. 5.
20. Waldemar George, "L'Exposition des arts industriels de 1925: Les Tendances générales," *L'Amour de l'art* 6 (August 1925): 283-91; in Nancy J. Troy, *Modernism and the Decorative Arts in France: Art Nouveau to Le Corbusier* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1991), 191-92.
21. Le Corbusier and Pierre Le Jeanneret, *The Complete Architectural Works* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1964), 1:104.
22. Le Corbusier was commissioned to carry out his ideas in the form of an estate of small houses at Pessac in the Bordeaux suburbs in 1925-26, but the project encountered great practical and political obstacles.
23. André Warnod, *Les Berceaux de la jeune peinture: Montmartre, Montparnasse* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1925), 7.
24. See, for example, Elie Faure, "L'Agonie de la peinture," *L'Amour de l'art* 12 (June 1931): 231.
25. Léon-Paul Fargue, "Montparnasse," in *Paris 1937* (Paris: La Ville de Paris, 1937), 247.
26. *Kiki's Memoirs*, trans. Samuel Putnam (Paris: At the Sign of the Black Manikin Press, 1930), chap. 27; Ernest Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1964), chap. 11.
27. Fargue, "Montparnasse," 249.
28. Kisling, in Georges Charensol, *Moïse Kisling* (Paris: Editions de Clermont, 1948), 17.
29. Pinturichio [Louis Vauxcelles], "Le Carnet des ateliers," *Carnet de la semaine*, January 1, 1926.
30. Robert Rey, "Le Salon des Tuileries," *Le Crapouillot*, May 16, 1923, 12; also Maurice Raynal, "Le Salon des Tuileries," *L'Intransigeant*, April 30, 1928.
31. Statutes of the Association Artistique les Surindépendants 1929. See also René Mendès-France, *Notre Emoi quotidien* (Paris: La Soupente, 1956), 30-36. (The Surindépendants was founded, in fact, after a dispute between Mendès-France, who became its secretary, and Auguste Herbin over the hanging of abstract art at its predecessor, the Vrais Indépendants.)
32. Roger Avermaete, "Reponse à l'enquête de Sélection sur la jeune peinture française," *Sélection* 5 (March 8, 1926): 183.
33. Grete Ring, "Der junge Künstler und sein Händler in Paris und Berlin," *Kunst und Künstler* (Berlin), February 29, 1931, 179-89.

CHAPTER VIII

1. Pierre Mac Orlan, *Paris 1937* (La Ville de Paris, 1937), 200; unless otherwise noted, translations from the French are by the author.
2. Pierre Mac Orlan, *Le Quai des Brumes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1927), 181.
3. Janet Flanner, *Paris Was Yesterday, 1925-1939* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989), xxiv.

34. Pinturicchio [Vauxcelles], "Le Carnet des ateliers," *Carnet de la semaine*, January 31, 1926.
35. Kahnweiler to Juan Gris, December 3, 1921, *Donation Louise et Michel Leiris: Collection Kahnweiler-Leiris* (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1984), 59.
36. Severini, *Life of a Painter*, 205.
37. Rosenberg to Gallatin, August 10, 1934 (in English in the original), Gallatin Papers, Archives of American Art, roll 507, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
38. P. Rosenberg to Quinn, February 9, 1922, and April 22, 1922, John Quinn Papers, Manuscripts Division, New York Public Library.
39. Quinn to L. Rosenberg, September 22, 1921; to P. Rosenberg, November 26, 1921; P. Rosenberg to Quinn, June 7, 1922; all, Quinn Papers.
40. Michael Fitzgerald, *Making Modernism: Picasso and the Creation of a Market for Modern Art* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1995), 137–60, 168–76.
41. Pierre Loeb, "Où va la peinture?" in Loeb, *Voyages à travers la peinture* (Paris: Bordas, 1945).
42. This information comes from Zborowski papers kindly made available to me by Mme Paulette Jourdain. A skilled worker earned about 1,500 francs a month in this period.
43. It has been suggested—for instance by Alfred H. Barr Jr. in *Matisse: His Art and His Public* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1951; reprint, London: Secker and Warburg, 1975), 105—that the prewar avant-garde was supported essentially by foreign collectors, like Sergei Shchukine and the Steins. There is a lot of truth in this, but the context in which this avant-garde developed was nonetheless one of unparalleled opportunity and support.
44. Collection Daniel Tzanck, Hôtel Drouot, June 4, 1925. For an account of the Tzanck-Apollinaire relationship, see Peter Read, "Gestes et opinions du Docteur Tzanck," *Que vlo-ve?* 20 (October–December 1986): 3–23.
45. Pierre Mille, reply to questionnaire, *Paris midi*, July 21, 1927.
46. Paul Poirer, reply to questionnaire, *Paris midi*, July 31, 1927.
47. Vauxcelles to Laffitte, c. 1910, Fonds Vauxcelles, Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie, Université de Paris.
48. Tzanck to *Comoedia*, March 1, 1925. See also Pinturicchio [Vauxcelles], "Le Carnet des ateliers," *Carnet de la semaine*, November 18, 1923; March 8 and April 5, 1925.
49. Vauxcelles, copy in Fonds Vauxcelles. The episode is discussed by Christopher Green, *Cubism and its Enemies: Modern Movements and Reaction in French Art, 1916–1928* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1987), 131.
50. Braque, in Tériade, "Les Arts: Confidences d'artistes: Georges Braque," *L'Intransigeant*, April 3, 1928.
51. Elie Faure, *André Derain* (Paris: G. Crès, 1923), 18, 23.
52. Jane Lee, *Derain* (Oxford: Phaidon, 1990), 95.
53. Adolphe Basler, "M. Paul Guillaume et sa collection de tableaux," *L'Amour de l'art* 7 (July 1929): 253–56.
54. Jean Cassou, "Henri Matisse," in *Histoire de l'art contemporain: La Peinture*, ed. René Huyghé (Paris: Librairie Felix Alcan, 1935; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1968), 107–12.
55. Francis Carco, *De Montmartre au Quartier Latin* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1927; reprint, 1949), 247.
56. Elie Faure, *Soutine* (Paris: Crès & Cie, 1929), 11; Waldemar George, *Soutine* (Paris: Le Triangle, 1928), 14.
57. Mondrian to Oud, 1921, *Mondrian* (Stuttgart, Germany: Staatsgalerie, 1981), 249.
58. Nicholson to John Summers, January 3, 1948, in *Ben Nicholson*, ed. Maurice de Sausmarez (London: Studio International, 1969), 57.
59. Gorin, autobiographical notes, in "Lettres à Jean Gorin," *Macula* (Paris) 2 (1977): 117–39.
60. Torres-García to Gorin, October 14, 1930, *ibid.*, 126.
61. Dawn Ades, in *Dada-Constructivism* (London: Annely Juda Fine Art, 1984), 33–45.
62. Duchamp, in *Marcel Duchamp*, ed. Anne d'Harnoncourt and Kynaston McShine (New York: Museum of Modern Art; and Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1973), 291.
63. Picabia to Tzara, June 4, 1919, Michel Sanouillet, *Dada à Paris* (Paris: Jean-Jacques Pauvert, 1965), 487. Louis Aragon, in *Le Paysan de Paris* (1926; reprint, Paris: Gallimard, Folio, 1994); *ibid.*, 179 (my translations).
64. Breton, in François Chapon, *Mystère et splendeurs de Jacques Doucet* (Paris: J.-C. Lattès, 1984), 294, 300.
65. Masson, in William Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art* (1969; reprint, London: Thames & Hudson, 1978), 174.
66. Salvador Dalí, "Objets surréalistes," *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution* 3 (1931): 16.
67. André Breton, *Les Vases communicants* (1932; reprint, Paris: Gallimard, 1970), 66–70. See also, André Breton, *Je vois, j'imagine: Poèmes-objets*, with a preface by Octavio Paz (Paris: Gallimard, 1991).
68. Giacometti to Pierre Matisse, 1947, in Yves Bonnefoy, *Alberto Giacometti* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991), 152.
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CHAPTER IX

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IX.

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CHRONOLOGY

C. 40,000 B.C.

Evidence of human presence on the site of Paris.

C. 4200 B.C.

First proof of a permanent settlement at Paris is found at the time of the 1991 excavation at Bercy: canoes, tools, bows, ceramics, and other artifacts.

C. 250–225 B.C.

A Celtic tribe, the Parisii, settle in a fortified town (*oppidum*) on the island in the Seine that will eventually become known as the Ile de la Cité.

C. 100 B.C.

Appearance of gold coinage of the Parisii.

52 B.C.

Victory by Labienus, Caesar's lieutenant, over the Parisii and the Auleri (another Gallic tribe), led by their chief, Camulogenus.

53 B.C.

Julius Caesar convokes the Assembly of the Gauls in the future city of Paris, then known to the Romans as Lutetia (Lutèce).

A.D. 14–37

During the reign of the Roman emperor Tiberius, Parisian boatmen erect the Pillar of the Nautae dedicated to Jupiter.

50–100

Construction of the forum of Lutetia at the summit of Mont Sainte-Geneviève, between the rue Saint-Jacques and the boulevard Saint-Michel, beneath what today is rue Soufflot.

100–200

Construction of three thermal baths, an amphitheater, and a théâtre in Lutetia.

C. 250

Martyrdom of the first bishop of Lutetia, Saint Dionysius (Saint Denis).

275–276

Sacking of the left bank of the Seine, probably by Germanic invaders.

C. 300

Construction of a rampart to protect the Ile de la Cité. About this time, Lutetia becomes known as Paris.

358

The Roman caesar Julian comes to Paris.

360

Julian is proclaimed emperor by his troops in Paris; shortly thereafter, a council is held condemning Arianism as a Christian heresy.

365–366

Valentinian I, Roman emperor of the western empire, comes to Paris.

C. 385

Saint Martin arrives in Paris and cures a leper at the northern gate of the city.

C. 435

Bishop Marcel dies and is buried in the cemetery that bears his name. Miracles occur at his tomb in the sixth century.

451

The Huns attack Paris. Saint Geneviève dissuades the citizens from abandoning their city.

464

Blockade of Paris by the Frankish king Chilperic I.

C. 475

Construction of a basilica on the site of the tomb of St. Denis.

C. 502

Burial of Saint Geneviève on the summit of the mountain that bears her name. There Clovis erects the basilica of Saints Apostles, later renamed Sainte-Geneviève, consecrated on December 24, 520.

508

Clovis declares Paris to be the capital.

C. 540–550

Construction of the cathedral of Saint-Etienne, later renamed Notre-Dame.

558

December 23: Consecration of the basilica of Saint-Vincent-et-Sainte-Croix (later Saint-Germain-des-Prés) by Saint Germain, bishop of the city.

585

Fire destroys most of the buildings on the Ile de la Cité.

639

Burial of Dagobert I in the abbey of Saint-Denis, which becomes the principal royal necropolis.

775

February 24: The new abbey of Saint-Denis is dedicated by its first bishop, Fulrad.

845

March 20: First appearance of the Normans at the walls of Paris. Charles the Bald is forced to pay 7,000 pounds of silver to obtain their departure after they plunder the city. They carry out frequent raids through 889.

867

April 22: First mention of the Ile Notre-Dame (Saint-Louis) in an act by Charles the Bald.

870

Charles the Bald orders the construction of the Grand Pont and the Petit Pont in order to bar the course of the Seine from the Normans.

885

November 24: Normans arrive before the Paris of repaired walls and reinforced bridges, a project overseen by Bishop Gozlin. They besiege the city through 886, when Emperor Charles the Great arrives and negotiates the Normans' departure for 700 pounds of silver.

978

October: Emperor Otton II lays siege to Paris. Hugues Capet crosses the river and forces a lifting of the siege on November 30.

988

October: Hugues Capet, king of France since 987, visits Paris. He returns in 989, 992, and 994-995.

997

April 19: King Robert the Pious comes to Paris. His return is also recorded in 999, 1019, 1027, and 1028.

1007

The extinction of the title of count of Paris with the death of Bouchard de Vendôme; the county becomes the king's possession.

1014

Death of Morard, abbé of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, who began the reconstruction of the abbey with the financial support of Robert the Pious.

1021

Flood of students to the episcopal school at Notre-Dame. Its first illustrious master is the archdeacon Albert, who dies in 1040.

1060

Reconstruction of the Abbey of Saint-Martin-des-Champs. The school is consecrated in 1067.

1100

Abélard begins teaching.

1112

August 3: Louis VI favors Saint-Denis over Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire. Paris emerges as the capital of the Capet kings, supplanting Orleans.

1113

Beginning of the reconstruction of the Grand Pont (pont au Change) downstream from its previous site. It is completed in 1116. The ancient bridge becomes the "old bridge" or the "planks of Mibrai." At the same time, the Petit Pont is reconstructed.

An abbey for the community of canons of Saint-Victor is erected, and becomes the center of a Georgian reformation and its teachings.

Abélard returns to Paris, where he teaches and becomes romantically involved with a student, Héloïse. In 1117 her enraged uncle, the canon Fulbert, orders Abélard castrated.

First mention of the church of Saint-Leufroy, situated near the Grand Pont and erected in the parish before 1150.

1119

The church of Saint-Jacques (de la Boucherie) is mentioned in a bull of Calixte II, which orders the reconstruction of a chapel on its ruins.

c. 1120

Teachers and students are installed on Mont Sainte-Geneviève, as the cloister at Notre-Dame becomes too crowded.

1124

August 3: Louis VI raises an army to confront Emperor Henry V. Through the course of this campaign he introduces the war cry for the royal army: "Montjoie Saint-Denis!" The oriflamme of Saint-Denis, a red banner with green fringe attached to a lance, appears for the first time.

1129

Epidemic of "mal des ardents" (ergotism or St. Anthony's Fire, an ergot poisoning from a fungus in rye).

1130

Foundation of the order of Saint-Jean-de-Latran.

November 3: Procession of the reliquary of Saint Geneviève ends an epidemic of "mal des ardents." The church of Sainte-Geneviève-des-Ardents is built to commemorate this "miracle des ardents."

1131

Louis VI grants the monks of the leprosarium of Saint-Lazare the right to hold an annual fair for Toussaint.

October 2: Philippe, eldest son of the king, dies when thrown from his horse as it spooks at a pig in rue Saint-Jean. In consequence, pigs are forbidden to roam the public roads.

1137

A market is installed at Champeaux, the origin of les Halles. It replaces the market at the place de Grève.

1139

Probable installation of the Order of the Temple in the Old Temple, in the neighborhood of the church of Saint-Gervais.

1140

Theologian Peter Lombard, author of *The Four Books of Sentences*, is a professor at the school of Notre-Dame.

July: The council of Sens condemns the thesis of Abélard, who since 1136 has been teaching at the Saint-Hilaire chapel that belongs to the abbey of Saint-Marcel. The theologian leaves Paris for Cluny.

1144

June 11: Consecration of the new basilica of Saint-Denis, one of the first examples of Gothic architecture. The construction began in 1132.

1147

On his departure for the crusades, King Louis VII, in the presence of Pope Eugenius III, entrusts his treasury to the Knights Templar and the regency to Suger, abbot of Saint-Denis, until his return (in 1149) in the first chapter-house in Paris of the Order of the Temple.

April 21: Consecration of the church of Saint-Pierre-de-Montmartre by Pope Eugenius III.

1150

Mention by Saint Bernard of the first windmill on the Copeaux.

1158

First mention of the town of Saint-Marcel.

1163

First mention of the town of Saint-Médard. Beginning of the reconstruction of Notre-Dame. It is completed in 1245.

April 21: Consecration of the chancel of the abbey church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés by Pope Alexandre III. The monks, who reject all interference of episcopal power, refuse entry to Bishop Maurice de Sully.

1164

Opening of rue Neuve-Notre-Dame at the time of the reconstruction of the cathedral. This leads to the demolition of the Hôtel-Dieu, which is rebuilt along the small branch of the Seine, south of the church square.

1166	The Saint-Lazare fair is extended from one to two weeks due to its success.	1183	Two market buildings are constructed in Champeaux, the first being Les Halles.	1202	Completion of the Louvre, a military fortress. Creation of the Trinity hospital (Enfants-Bleus) on the road to Saint-Denis. The abbé of Sainte-Geneviève buys the Garlande field for the construction of houses. A number of students are installed there, and the rue du Fouarre becomes the center of the teachings of the liberal arts while the Bruneau becomes the base of the law schools.
1170	Beginning of the construction of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre.	1184	Erection of a parish chapel, dedicated to Saint-Nicolas-des-Champs, near the priory of Saint-Martin-des-Champs.	1204	First mention of the parish of Saint-Honoré. Foundation of the Cistercian abbeys of Port-Royal and of Saint-Antoine-des-Champs.
1171	Josse of London founds the first college for students; a room of the Hôtel-Dieu is reserved for eighteen seminary students, thus "the college of eighteen." Creation of the hospital Saint-Gervais or Saint-Anastase.	1186	Beginnings of an urban plan: the principal streets are paved by order of King Philip Augustus.	1209	Construction of the city wall begins on the Left Bank. It is completed in 1213.
1175	Earliest evidence of the existence of the market town of Saint-Germain-de-Prés, which already comprises several parishes.	1187	A wall is erected to enclose the Cemetery of the Innocents, thus separating it from the markets of Champeaux and placing a limit on the chaos that the markets produce.	1211	Pope Innocent III authorizes the professors of the university to be represented by a manager. The widow of Etienne Bérot founds the second student college, the Saint-Honoré charity college, intended for thirteen poor students.
1176	Etienne de Tournai is nominated as abbot of Sainte-Geneviève. The abbey becomes the principal center of learning, as Saint-Victor declines. First mention of the fair of Saint-Germain. Louis VII keeps most of the profits for himself.	1190	Philip Augustus departs for the crusades. Six burghers of Paris form a council of regents, each possessing a key to the royal treasure. Before his departure, the king orders the city to be enclosed by a wall. This wall is completed in 1208 for the Right Bank, and between 1209 and 1213 for the Left Bank.	1213	Erection of the parish church of Saint-Jean-en-Grève.
1180	February 5: The leaders of the Jewish community are arrested. They are sentenced by Philip Augustus to pay a fine of 15,000 marcs of silver.	1191	First mention of the royal banner, blue emblazoned with gold fleurs-de-lis.	1219	Construction begins on the monastery of the Order of the Trinity and the Redemption of the Captives, called the Mathurins (rue du Sommerard).
1181	The king buys out the annual fair held near the leprosarium of Saint-Lazare since 1131. It is transferred to Champeaux, at the site of what will be Les Halles. Foundation of Sainte-Agnès as a chapel of ease, a dependency of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois until its establishment in 1223 as a parish, dedicated to Saint-Eustache.	1194	July 3: The royal archives are lost during the battle of Fréteval. Philip Augustus decides not only to re-create but to double them, requiring one of each article to be kept in Paris. This is the apparent beginning of the installation of royal administration in the city.	1222	Erection of the parish church of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont. First division of the university into nations.
1182	April: Expulsion of the Jews from the city; their synagogue becomes the church of La Madeleine. They obtain authorization to return in 1198, accepting a fine in the form of heavier taxes. May 19: Consecration of the high altar of the new cathedral of Notre-Dame.	c. 1200	For the first time, signs are permitted for the identification of private dwellings; one hundred years later they will be allowed for inns and hotels as well.		November: <i>Forma Pacis</i> between the king, the bishop, and the chapter. The king obtains the jurisdiction over Les Halles and Saint-Gervais; the bishop over the market towns of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois, Couture-l'Evêque, and Clos-Bruneau.
		1200	Brawl between the provost sergeants of Paris and students causes the death of five students from Liège. Philip Augustus disowns his provost and yields to the universities, which are threatening to leave the city, by confirming the privilege that professors and students will be judged exclusively by a tribunal of the bishop. This marks the emergence of a new power, the university.		

1223	Dismantling of the parish of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois. The chapel of Sainte-Agnès in Champeaux becomes the parish church of Saint-Eustache.	Foundation of the college and priory of Saint-Bernard, called the Bernardines, by Etienne de Lexington, abbé of Clairvaux, to provide lodging for Cistercians coming to study theology at the university.	1260	Geoffroy de Courfraud becomes the Knight of the Watch, the first known guardian of the city. The guild of surgeons and barbers is founded.
1229	First mention of the church of Sainte-Catherine-du-Val-des-Ecoliers. February 26: Fights between students and provost sergeants of the king during the carnival. The university protests. April 15: Professors depart in protest from the university. Some are installed at Oxford and Cambridge, but most of the mendicants stay, and the Dominicans open their monastery to students.	1248 Teaching of Bonaventure at the university until 1257, then again between 1267 and 1274. April 26: Consecration of the Sainte-Chapelle, constructed to shelter the relics acquired by Louis IX.	1261 Nomination of the first provost of Paris to become a royal functionary, Etienne Boileau. Creation of a college for the students of the Order of Cluny.	
C. 1230	Creation of a chapel of Chardonnet, where a new quartier is developing. Establishment of the first Franciscan monastery, on the rue des Cordeliers (de l'Ecole-de-Médecine).	1250 Installation of Augustine monks near the Montmartre gate, by the chapel Sainte-Marie-l'Egyptienne.	1262 OR 1263 June 6: Dedication of the church Sainte-Madeleine of the Cordelier monastery (rue de l'Ecole-de-Médecine).	
1231	Clearing of the Couture-l'Evêque marsh. April 13: The bull <i>Parens scientiarum</i> , according to the schools the privilege of “canon” and assimilating the clerics, ends the conflict with the university.	1252 The Prémontrés found a college on the rue des Cordeliers (de l'Ecole-de-Médecine). Thomas Aquinas begins teaching at the university. He is in Paris up to 1259, and again between 1269 and 1272.	1268 The royal provost Etienne Boileau compiles the <i>Livre des métiers de Paris</i> , which mentions the statutes of 132 professions.	
1233	June 2: Dedication of the abbey church of Saint-Antoine-des-Champs.	1254 Louis IX creates the Hospice des Quinze-Vingts, intended for three hundred blind people, on the rue Saint-Honoré near the Louvre. The first elephant seen in Paris arrives as a gift to Louis IX from Henry III of England. June: First mansion, the future Hôtel d'Alençon, constructed by a lord, Alphonse de Poitiers, brother of the king, near the Louvre. His example is followed by other great personages of the kingdom.	C. 1275 Copyist studios are developed to satisfy the needs of the university and the establishment of the system of <i>pecia</i> (“cahier”) allows the copying of a manuscript by several scribes at one time.	
1235	Foundation of the chapel Saint-Leu-Gilles.	1256 June 10: Laying of the first stone of the monastery of Longchamp by Isabelle, sister of the king.	1290 April 9: A Jew by the name of Jonathan and his wife are accused of stabbing the wafer (Host). Blood is said to have flowed unceasingly from the wafer. They are both burned at the stake. Their house is razed and a Chapel of the Miracle, the future church of Billettes (rue des Archives), is erected on the site.	
C. 1240	The bishop Guillaume d'Auvergne orders the regulation of ringing the bells for the hours, marking the growing importance of time in connection with the development of industry.	1257 September 1: Opening of the college founded by Robert de Sorbon, the future Sorbonne.	1292 University power reaches its peak, as the pope gives it the right to teach throughout Christendom.	
1243	Erection of the parish chapel of Saint-Nicolas-du-Chardonnet.	1258 Establishment of the Servants of the Virgin on the rue des Blancs-Manteaux, which takes its name from their habits.	1293 Relocation of the Hermits of Saint-Augustin into the monastery yielded by the Brothers of the Sachets (quai Grands-Augustins). They have been installed since 1250 in the area near the chapel Sainte-Marie-l'Egyptienne (rue des Vieux-Augustins, now rues Hérold and d'Argout).	
1246	Financial and judicial autonomy of the university, which receives its own seal.	1259 The Carmelites are established in the parish of Saint-Paul.		

1296

Extension of the Palais de la Cité, in places beyond its original walls, which are moved. By 1314, it has grown to accommodate the royal administration in its entirety. The work is completed in 1324.

Appearance of the Conseil de Ville, composed of twenty-four board members.

December 21: Flooding causes the fall of the Petit Pont, then of the Grand Pont (December 24), and finally the Petit-Châtelet. The flood lasts five months.

1299

First mention of the construction of a clock.

1303

March 18: The seat of Parliament is fixed in Paris by ordinance. (It has in fact been installed in the Palais de la Cité since about 1250.)

1304

Installation of moneychangers on the Grand-Pont, which takes the name pont aux Changeurs or pont au Change.

1306

July 21: Expulsion of the Jews and confiscation of their goods. They are authorized to return in July 1315 and regain a third of their credit.

1307

October 13: King Philip IV and Pope Clement V arrest the Templars on charges of heresy. Their trial lasts until March 19, 1314, when Jacques de Molay, the last known grand master of the order, is burned at the stake. Their immense wealth is confiscated.

1310

A clock is installed in the Palais de la Cité; it is completed in 1314.

June: Marguerite Porette, original inspiration of Hainaut, is burned at the stake in the place de Grève for relapsing to Judaism.

1313

Construction of the city's first quay, between the monastery of Grands-Augustins and the Hotel Nesle.

1316

Construction of a hospice for pilgrims of Saint-Jacques, rue Saint-Denis, by Imbert of Lyon. In 1319, the Hospital of Saint-Jacques is built by a bourgeois brotherhood of the city.

1320

December: Definitive organization of Parliament into three chambers: Grand-Chambre, Enquêtes, and Requêtes.

1321

September 4: Creation of the first brotherhood of musicians, Saint-Julien-des-Ménétriers.

1326

January 6: Breaking up of the Seine: wooden bridges are destroyed by ice. Supplies are brought on boats to the inhabitants of the Cité for five weeks.

May 18: Foundation of the hospital of Saint-Sépulcre.

1328

February: Particularly deadly epidemic.

1337

Beginning of the construction of Château de Vincennes.

1339

Appearance of two brotherhoods devoted to theater: the Confrérie de la Passion pour les Mystères and the Gallants Sans Souci pour les Farces.

1348

End of August: Beginning of the Black Plague, which will last two years. The royal council leaves the city in May of 1349, at the height of the epidemic.

1350

Opening of the first open-air sewer, that of Pont-Perrin, leaving the place Baudoyer to follow east along the rue Saint-Antoine, where it later drains into the ditch around the Bastille.

1352

The Celestines take up residence in the ancient monastery of the Carmelites in the parish of Saint-Paul.

1356

October 15: Charles V orders the construction of a new wall to protect the city, which will be completed in 1383.

1357

July 7: Etienne Marcel buys the "House of Pillars" in the place de Grève, wherein he installs his administration.

1358

Marcel organizes Paris on the model of Flemish cities, giving his partisans a rallying insignia, a red and blue hood. In February he orchestrates a bourgeois invasion of the Palais de la Cité, during which the generals of Champagne and Normandy are killed. Marcel is brought into the Council in March, but the dauphin flees the capital soon afterward. Charles resolves to blockade Paris and at the same time convenes new estates in Compiègne. Now desperate, Marcel appeals for help from the insurgent peasants of the Beauvais (the "Jacques"), who are ultimately crushed; next, he seeks the aid of the king of Navarre, whom he brings to Paris and appoints "captain general." The entrance of English and Navarrais forces into the capital arouses bitter feelings among the populace and strengthens the dauphin's cause. Marcel is assassinated at the porte Saint-Martin on July 31, 1358. The crackdown that follows ends the city administration's attempt to assert its authority over the all-powerful crown.

1361

Creation of the Petit-Saint-Antoine hospital.

1362

Creation of the Saint-Esprit hospital.

1365

Construction of the monastery of the Celestines.

1368

Diversion of the Bièvre to the Saint-Bernard moat. It henceforth flows to the Seine at the Tournelle; the section that remains in Paris is transformed into a sewer.

1370

The king orders that all schools ring their hours and quarter hours in keeping with the hour marked by the clock of Henri de Vic, installed in the courtyard of the Palais de la Cité, today the oldest clock existing.

April 22: Placement of the first stone of the Bastille.

September 13: Consecration of the church of the Celestines.

1371

Erection of the guild for woodworkers other than carpenters, indicating the popularity and diversification of furniture.

1378

Construction of the pont Saint-Michel, completed in 1387 and from then on called the Pont Neuf.

1382

March 1: Insurrection begins when the tax farmers attempt to collect taxes. A crowd armed with lead mallets seizes the Hôtel de Ville, giving the insurrection its popular name, the Revolt of the Maillotins. The king, already busy with the revolt in Rouen, suspends the levying of indirect tax.

June 1: The bourgeois surrender to the king and are fined 80,000 pounds.

1383

Completion of the new wall ordered by Charles V, arranged in 1356 by Etienne Marcel. This does not affect the Right Bank; the wall of Philip Augustus is only to be improved on the Left Bank.

January 27: Abolition of the provost of the markets, the municipal magistrates, and the city militia.

1389

August 22: Appearance of the first horse-drawn coach with spring suspension at the formal entry of Isabel of Bavaria. Extremely expensive, this vehicle remains a rarity: there were three under Francois I.

1391

August: Creation of the first guild of painters, called "painters and carvers of images."

1393

Ménagier de Paris, the first book of recipes, is published.

January 28: "Bal des Ardents" in the hotel Saint-Paul: Charles VI and five of his friends attend, dressed as savages. The duc d'Orléans, purportedly curious to identify his brother the king, holds a torch close to the faces of the "savages" and (accidentally?) sets their costumes aflame. The king narrowly escapes death, but four of his companions perish.

1394

September 17: Edict of the expulsion of the Jews from France. Not rescinded until March 23, 1615, it signifies the legal disappearance of this community for more than two centuries.

1407

November 21: Snowfall, followed by extreme cold. Carts cross the frozen Seine, ink freezes on quills.

November 23: Assassination of Louis d'Orléans in the rue Vieille-de-Temple, by killers bribed by the duc de Bourgogne, John the Fearless.

1408

January 31: Thawing of the river; the Petit Pont and Grand Pont collapse.

March 8: In an apologia on tyrannicide, the theologian Jean Petit, advocate of John the Fearless, seeks to justify the death of Louis d'Orléans before the court, the representatives of the university, and the municipality.

1411

October 23: John the Fearless moves to Paris.

1413

The Burgundian/Armagnac conflict comes to a head with the riot of April 27 and the overrunning of the Hotel Saint-Paul, led by Simon Caboche. The tide turns against the Burgundians on July 13 as the Parliament and notable Parisians call for talks. On August 2 many Burgundians flee the city. On the 29th the duc de Bourgogne accords the Burgundians, with the exception of Simon Caboche and the principal leaders, an amnesty.

1418

July 14: John the Fearless and Queen Isabel enter through the gate of Saint-Antoine.

1420

May 30: The university and an assembly of bourgeois swear an oath to respect the treaty of Troyes, which makes Henry V of England the heir to Charles VI.

1422

June–July: Smallpox epidemic.

October 21: Death of Charles VI. The kings of France henceforth rarely visit Paris until 1528, when François I reinstalls himself in the capital.

1424

August: Painting of the most ancient known dance of the macabre in the Cemetery of the Innocents.

1427

August 17: Arrival of the first gypsies, known as *gitans*, *tsiganes*, *bohémiens*, and so on. The bishop excommunicates fortune-tellers as well as the faithful who resort to such acts of sorcery.

1429

September 8: Defeat of Joan of Arc. She is wounded during the storming of the Saint-Honoré gate.

1431

Joan of Arc burned to death at Rouen.

December 16: Coronation of Henry VI, an infant of nine years, by his uncle, the cardinal of England.

1436

February 28: Charles VII declares amnesty to Parisians under the English-Burgundians. His troops encircle the city.

April 13: Insurrection against the English garrison while Charles VII's troops enter through the Saint-Jacques gate. On the 15th, the English soldiers and their partisans are authorized to embark for Rouen.

1447

The Gobelins carpet plant is set up by the Biève, just outside the walls of Saint-Marcel.

1455

June 5: François Villon, author in 1456 of *Petit Testament*, murders the priest Philippe Sermoine.

1464

Production of *Farce de Maître Pathelin*, the first important French play.

1470

The first printing office in Paris is installed at the Sorbonne, producing *Lettres* by Gasparin de Bergame, printed by Ulrich Gering, Michel Friburger, and Martin Crantz.

1473

Printing press moves from the Sorbonne to a building with the sign “Soleil d’Or,” on the rue Saint-Jacques.

1476

First Parisian Bible printed.

1477

Creation of the royal postal service, or horse post.

1480

April 4: Completion of the first spring clock. Jean de Paris, watchmaker to the king, receives 16 pounds 10 sous from Louis XI for a clock “to carry with himself where ever he may wish to go.”

1483

March: Creation of a new fair of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.

1484

July 30: Scandal at the Sorbonne: Jean Lailler, theology candidate, opposes the authority of the Bible and the tradition of the church, and vehemently criticizes the pope. He makes amends on June 29, 1486, and obtains a pardon by the bishop, provoking the fury of Innocent VIII.

1485

Construction of the Hôtel des Abbés de Cluny.
Printing of Jean Du Pré’s first poster.

1492

Beginning of the reconstruction of the church Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, completed in 1626.

1494

The municipality refuses to loan 100,000 ecus to the king for his expedition to Italy. It refuses again in 1496 to contribute financially, on the grounds that it believes the adventure to be fruitless.

March 15: Foundation of a Minim monastery in Chaillot.

1500

July 6: Beginning of the reconstruction in stone of the Notre-Dame bridge, under the direction of the Italian monk Giovanni Giocondo. It is completed in 1514.

1505

First *Book of Hours* printed in roman font by Thielmann Kerver. Gothic lettering begins slowly to disappear.

1512

Gilles de Gourmont creates a font of the first Greek alphabet intended for Parisian printing.

1521

April 15: The Sorbonne condemns Luther’s theses.

1523

Publication by Simon de Colines of Jacques Lefèvre d’Etaples’s translation of the New Testament. In 1525 the theological faculty forbids the translation of the Holy Scriptures.

August 8: Jean Vallière, Augustine monk and first martyr of the Reformation, is burned at the stake for his belief that Jesus was conceived like other human beings.

1527

March 15: Letters patent for the construction of the Louvre quay, completed in 1538.

1528

Construction for François I of an enormous pavilion, known as the Château de Madrid, to accommodate the court during hunts in the Bois de Boulogne.

March 15: François I announces his intention to make Paris his principal residence.

1530

First important French typographic foundry created by Claude Garamond.

1531

December: Plague epidemic. The Cemetery of the Innocents having become overcrowded, a new place of burial is opened for the plague victims in the Grenelle plain, “facing the Bonshommes” of Chaillot.

1532

August 19: Laying of the first stone for the new church of Saint-Eustache. It is not completed until 1637.

December 22: Presentation of a project for a new Hôtel de Ville by Dominique de Cortone. The first stone is laid on July 15, 1533.

1534

August 15: Vow of Ignatius de Loyola at the foot of Montmartre. He and his companions decide to devote themselves to God and to the pope, casting off the basis of the Compagnie de Jesus.

1536

July 29: Work on the construction of the new fortifications, abandoned after six months as the Spanish military threat recedes.

1539

January 17: François I establishes royal printers for Greek texts, later the Royal Printing, where Claude Garamond produces in 1540 his magnificent characters.

September: Ordinance for roadwork mentioned for the first time in a public posting.

1540

January 1: Formal entry of Charles V.

1546

August 2: François I issues letters patent for the reconstruction of the western wing of the Louvre, entrusted to Pierre Lescot, who is assisted by Jean Goujon for the decoration.

August 3: Printer Etienne Dolet burned at the stake in the place Maubert. On the 19th, another printer, Michel Vincent, is burned, and on the September 13 yet another, Pierre Greteau.

1578.

1547

December: The Saint-Michel bridge collapses when it is hit by a boat. Philibert De l'Orme is charged with its reconstruction.

1548

August 30: Inauguration of the first roofed theater, situated in the Hôtel de Bourgogne and utilized first for *Confrère de la Passion*.

1549

June 16: The fontaine Saints-Innocents, decorated by Jean Goujon, is put into service at Les Halles.

1550

September 8: Henry II issues letters patent for the construction of a new wall to protect the outer settlements of the Left Bank.

1552

January 4: Acceptance of Pierre Lescot's estimate for the reconstruction of the Petit Pont.

1553

Italian café owners introduce sorbet.

February: First classical French tragedy, *Cléopâtre captive* by Etienne Jodelle, is performed before the king.

August 7: Laying of the first stone of a boulevard between the Celestine monastery and the site of the Tower of Billy, a new fortification that follows the course of the wall by Charles V.

1554

July 12: Laying of first stone of the porte Neuve, subsequently called porte de la Conférence, at the western edge of the garden of the Tuileries.

1559

May 25: First Calvinist synod, rue des Marais (Visconte), is completed on the 29th with the setting up of the reform church of France.

June 30: Party for the marriages of the sister and daughter of the king with the duc de Savoie and the king of Spain. Afterward, Henry II is mortally wounded in the eye by the lance of Montgomery during a joust on the rue Saint-Antoine.

1564

Construction of the Tuileries begins, overseen by Catherine de Médicis and her architect Philibert De l'Orme.

1565

March 9: Letters patent are issued declaring that corbeled, half-timbered buildings be replaced with either stone walls or walls of stone with lime and sand, "for the decoration of the aforementioned city."

August 1: Construction decided on for a quay along the monastery of the Minims of Nigeon (Chaillot).

1566

Construction of the Marché Neuf west of the Petit Pont begins. At the same time the Gloriette quay is built.

July 12: Construction of the new rampart that will include the palace and gardens of the Tuileries begins.

1571

March 6: Arrival of the first troupe of Italian comic actors, I Gelosi, soon after forbidden by Parliament.

1572

August 18: Marriage of Henry of Bourbon, king of Navarre, and Marguerite of Valois, sister of Charles IX. The city is full of Protestants with their chief and the partisans of the ultra-Catholic duc de Guise.

August 22: Maurevert's unsuccessful assassination attempt on Coligny on the rue des Poulies.

Catherine de Médicis, who has ordered the crime, is in a panic. The night of the 23rd, she persuades the king to order the massacre of the Protestants.

August 24: Beginning of the Saint Bartholomew Massacre, around four in the morning, when the bell of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois rings. The killings last until the 30th and take the lives of about two thousand Protestant victims.

1573

Beginning of the construction by Jean Bullant of the new residence of Catherine de Médicis, the future Hôtel de Soissons, completed in 1584.

Appearance of the technique of copperplate engraving.

1576

May 19: First performance of the Italian comic troupe I Gelosi, in the Petit-Bourbon auditorium, to great acclaim.

1577

November 7: Nomination of a commission to study the construction of the future Pont Neuf. On February 15, 1578, Henry III chooses the project for the western point of the Ile de la Cité.

1578

May 31: Laying of the first stone of the Pont Neuf by Henry III.

1581

September 24: First royal French ballet, *Circé* by Balthazar de Beujoueux, is performed at the Louvre in honor of the marriage of Anne de Joyeuse, favorite of the king, to Marguerite de Vaudémont.

1582

December 9: The Gregorian calendar is enforced, turning December 9 into December 20.

1584

Jacques Androuet du Cerceau builds the Hôtel d'Angoulême (at the corner of rue Pavée and rue Francs-Bourgeois), first Parisian building of the colossal order.

1587

March 20: Charles de Mayenne, brother of the duc de Guise, implicated in an assassination plot against Henry III, flees the city.

July 21: Last procession of the king and the penitents, under the leadership of the cardinal de Bourbon.

September 2: Riot after the incarceration of three dissenting preachers by order of the king, Henry III, who wishes a reconciliation with the Protestants, gives in to the crowd, frees the priests, and leaves the capital to put himself at the head of his army.

He returns on December 22.

- 1588
- May 9: Triumphant entry of Henry of Guise, to cheering Parisians.
- May 12: Day of barricades; insurrection against Henry III, who abandons the city to Guise on the night of the 13th and withdraws to the Loire.
- 1589
- March 7: Parliament confirms the League of Sixteen's nomination of Charles de Mayenne as lieutenant general of the state. On the 13th, the League of Sixteen declares the cardinal de Bourbon as king under the name Charles X.
- November 1: Henry IV fails in a surprise attack against the wall of the Left Bank. The League threatens to purge the militia.
- 1590
- Henry IV continues his assault on the city, failing to break through even after the popular revolt of August 8, when thousands of starved demonstrators assemble in the courtyard of the Palais de Justice with cries of "bread or peace." He raises the siege soon after a failed night attack on September 10–11, upon the announcement that the Spanish army is approaching.
- 1591
- January 3: Drought. Pierre de L'Estoile notes in his *Journal* that the level of the Seine is so low as to almost allow a man to walk dry-footed from the Augustins quay to the Île de la Cité.
- January 20: Day of flour. Dressed as peasants leading donkeys laden with flour, officers of Henry IV's army try in vain to gain the Saint-Honoré gate.
- April 1: New purge of Parliament by the League. President Brisson is among the banished.
- April 6: The Brigard affaire. Near to Mayenne, prosecutor of the king and of the city, Brigard is accused of having secret dealings with Henry IV and is imprisoned. Parliament banishes him in October to permit him to escape from the Sixteen.
- September 2: Letter of the Sixteen to Philip II of Spain offers him the crown of France.
- November 15: Punitive action by the Sixteen against Parliament. President Brisson and two other magistrates are convicted and hanged. Their bodies are exposed in the place de Grève on the 16th. In spite of this demonstration of force, popular opinion turns more and more against the extremists.
- November 28: Entrance of Mayenne at the head of a small army. He captures Bussy-Leclerc and delivers him to the Bastille on the first of December.
- December 4: Mayenne orders the arrests of the Sixteen. Four of them are hung at the Louvre. On the 9th, Mayenne explains himself before the scandalized Sorbonne. On the 10th, he accords a general amnesty to those of the Sixteen who have not fled or been hung.
- 1593
- July 25: Abjuration of Catholicism by Henry IV in the Saint-Denis basilica.
- 1594
- March 24: Formal entry of Henry IV cheered by the masses.
- 1595
- January 9: Bids for the construction of the galerie Bord-de-l'Eau, which will link the Louvre to Tuileries, begin.
- 1596
- December 23: Collapse of the pont aux Meuniers. It is reconstructed in 1609 under the name of pont Marchand.
- 1602
- Tapestry makers from Flanders introduce the Brussels technique of weaving and reinvigorate the Gobelins enterprise.
- January 2: The construction of the Samaritan pump fountain begins.
- November 12: Sully, nominated as superintendent of buildings, oversees work on the Louvre and the Tuileries.
- 1603
- June 20: The king crosses the Pont Neuf, the first bridge constructed with sidewalks and without houses, but the work is not completed until July 1606.
- July 26: Beginning of the building of the Ursuline monastery on the street of the same name. The construction of a chapel begins on June 22, 1620.
- 1604
- June 29: Foundation of the Capucine monastery on the rue Saint-Honoré.
- 1605
- August 5: Registration of the letters patent ordering the creation of the Royal Square (place des Vosges).
- 1606
- Creation of the Hôpital de la Charité (39–45, rue des Saints-Pères) for the brothers of charity, established in 1602 on the rue de Seine.
- A carpet factory following "the methods of Persia and Turkey" is installed in the Louvre. This is the origin of the Savonnerie.
- 1607
- February 6: Opening of the rue Dauphine, soon followed by the rue Christine and the rue d'Anjou-Orléans.
- May 28: Letters patent are issued to open the Dauphine square.
- 1608
- January 1: Inauguration of the galerie Bord-de-l'Eau connecting the Louvre and Tuileries.
- 1610
- Opening of a Jesuit noviciate (80, rue Bonaparte).
- May 14: Ravaillac assassinates Henry IV while the king's carriage is halted in traffic on the rue de la Ferronnerie.
- August 18: Laying of the first stone of the building intended for the Royal College (Collège de France) as a site for the College de Tréguier.
- 1611
- September 16: Laying of the first stone for a Minim church at the Royal Square.
- 1612
- April 5–7: Grand Carrousel for the inauguration of the Royal Square.
- 1613
- February 6: Laying of the first stone for the monastery of the barefoot Carmelites on the chemin de Vaugirard.

1614

April 19: Contract for the development of the Ile Notre-Dame and Ile aux Vaches. With Poulletier and Le Regrattier as partners, Christophe Marie fills in the ditch separating the two islands, creating the future Ile Saint-Louis, and constructs the pont Marie, completed in 1635, which links the island to the Left Bank.

August 30: Dedication of the church of the Annunciation to the monastery of the Recollets on the rue du Faubourg-Saint-Martin.

1615

April 2: Beginning of construction of the palais du Luxembourg for Marie de Médici, designed by Salomon de Brosse. It is completed in 1621.

1616

January 30: Disaster on the Seine: the pont Saint-Michel is swept away, and the pont aux Changeurs is damaged.

July 24: Louis XIII lays the first stone of the new church of Saint-Gervais. It is built in five years.

1618

June: Letters patent transfer the control of libraries, printers, and publishers from ecclesiastical control to civil authorities. They are required to take an oath that is recorded in the Châtelet.

1619

July 27: Laying of the first stone for the Trinité des Petits Augustins Réformés monastery (today the Ecole des Beaux-Arts).

1620

Christophe Marie builds the pont de la Tournelle. Made of wood, it is swept away by the freezing of the river in 1637, and again in 1651. In 1654 it is reconstructed in stone.

1621

September 27: Laying of the first stone of the church of the Oratoire on the rue Saint-Honoré.

1622

The Palais mill is built at the foot of Montmartre. It becomes the Galette mill (moulin de la Galette) in the second half of the nineteenth century.

1624

The construction of Notre-Dame-de-Bonne-Nouvelle begins.

April 24: Auctioning of the reconstruction work for the north wing of the Louvre. On June 28, the first stone is laid for the future pavillon l'Horloge.

July 31: Anne d'Autriche lays the first stone for the Val-de-Grâce monastery.

1625

June 16: Establishment of the Port-Royal de Paris.

1626

Construction of the pont au Double.

Exhibition of an elephant before Louis XII, the second seen by Parisians since 1254.

January: Edict for the construction of a medicinal garden in the Royal Gardens, its site not yet determined.

February 25: Consecration of the church of Saint-Etienne-du-Mont, the construction of which had begun in 1492.

July 6: Building deal arranged for the construction of the new Sorbonne.

1627

March 7: Laying of the first stone of the Jesuit "maison professe" on the rue Saint-Antoine. On the 10th, the first stone is laid for the church of Saint-Louis (now Saint-Paul-Saint-Louis).

1629

Beginning of construction of the Palais-Cardinal (future Palais-Royal) for Richelieu. It is completed in 1636.

Creation of the first bureau of finance or "bureau of skill" by Théophraste Renaudot on the rue de la Calandre.

December 9: Louis XIII lays the first stone of the chapel for the "barefoot Augustins," or "small friars." It is replaced in 1633 by the church of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires.

1630

Construction of the pont Saint-Landry between Ile de la Cité and Ile Saint-Louis.

September 2: Gaston d'Orléans lays the first stone for the church of Saint-Jacques-du-Haut-Pas. It is completed in 1685.

1631

May 30: First issue of Théophraste Renaudot's *La Gazette de France*, the oldest journal in France.

October 9: Contract for the construction of a new wall reinforced with bastions. The work continues to 1647.

1632

Construction of the pont Rouge or Barbier that replaces the ferry that has left its name on the rue du Bac. Reconstructed in stone in 1689, it becomes the pont Royal.

August 13: Consecration of the chapel of Saint-Dominique of the noviciate of the reform Dominicans on the rue du Bac.

1633

November 23: Ruling by the Council orders the construction of new defenses to protect the suburbs of Saint-Honoré, Montmartre, and La Villeneuve. These are the "Fossés-Jaunes" completed in 1636.

1634

March 13: First session of the Académie Française, instituted officially by letters patent on January 27, 1635.

1636

Beginning of tea drinking in Paris, as documented by Delamare in his *Traité de la police*.

June 6: Richelieu gives Louis XIII the Palais-Cardinal, which becomes, when completed, the Palais-Royal.

December: Enormous success of Corneille's *Cid*, performed on the Marais tennis court by the Montdory troupe, called the "Marais troupe of the king."

1637

April 26: Consecration of the church of Saint-Eustache begun in 1532.

1640

Creation of the Royal Printer of the Louvre.

1641

January 16: Inauguration of a theater at the Palais-Cardinal (Palais-Royal).

1643

Failure of the first establishment to sell coffee. Success does not come until 1672.

- 1644
January 1: Opening on the Mestayers court of the Illustre Théâtre by Madeleine Béjart and Jean-Baptiste Poquelin, called Molière, protégés of the duke of Orléans.
- 1645
February 28: *La Finta pazza*, a work attributed to Marco Marazzoli, becomes the first opera to be performed in Paris when it is put on in the Palais-Royal.
April 1: Louis XIII lays the first stone of the church of Val-de-Grâce.
- 1646
February 20: Beginning of construction of the church of Saint-Sulpice. It is not completed until 1788.
- 1647
March 2: Triumph of the opera *Orfeo* by Luigi Rossi, with ingenious stage machinery by Torelli.
- 1648
The *fronde* of Parliament begins when Anne of Austria (Louis XIV's mother) and Cardinal Mazarin (Anne's advisor) introduce a new proposal to raise money for the financial backing of the Thirty Years' War that requires government officials to give up four years' salary. When Parliament and the high courts reject the plan and draft another limiting royal authority, Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarin order the arrest of the leaders of Parliament who had opposed them. The populace protest by barricading the streets of Paris until Anne of Austria and Cardinal Mazarin are forced to release the arrested government officials. With the Peace of Westphalia, royal troops are now available to suppress the *fronde*. Louis XIV, Anne of Austria, and Cardinal Mazarin secretly flee the city as the royal army occupies the streets of Paris. A compromise is finally reached between Parliament and the royal family in March of 1649.
January 27: Foundation of a painting and sculpture academy by Charles Le Brun and Eustache Le Sueur.
- 1649
In the beginning of the year the court again flees, and contentions continue with Mazarin.
- January 14: Flooding. The suburbs of Saint-Antoine and Marais, as well as the Ile Saint-Louis, are under water. In February, the Tuileries bridge (pont Rouge) is partially damaged.
- 1650
Plot by the Prince de Condé to seize power, upon his return from the Thirty Years' War, result in his arrest in January. Condé's sister, Madame de Lonqueville, calls on Marshal Turenne to gather his Spanish allies in order to release her brother, but they are defeated.
- 1651
February 6–7: A coalition of Condé's party, the Parlement of Paris, and a rival noble faction under Cardinal de Retz (1613–79) obtains Condé's release and Mazarin's exile.
May 15: First horse race in the bois de Boulogne.
- 1652
Condé, although defeated by the vicomte de Turenne in July, establishes a brief dictatorship over Paris, but he abandons the city in October to join the Spanish troops that he had invited into the country. The rebellion soon collapses, and Mazarin overturns most of the reforms of 1648. Condé goes on to continue the battle against France as the commander of the Spanish forces before being defeated in 1658. He is then pardoned and returns to the French court. Before retiring at Chantilly, he will engineer a number of successful military campaigns for Louis XIV.
- 1653
Construction of the church of Saint-Roch begins. It is completed in 1740.
- 1658
March 1: The highest known flooding of the Seine (8.81 meters compared to 8.50 in 1910) destroys the pont Marie, partially constructed in stone.
October 24: Molière's troupe is awarded the privilege to play before the king.
- 1659
May 10: Molière's *L'Etourdi* ('The blunderer') is presented at the Louvre. *Les Précieuses ridicules* (The pretentious ladies) plays there on October 21.
November 28: The king awards David Chaillou, first valet of the chamber of commerce, the privilege to make and sell hot chocolate, the debut of this drink.
- 1660
Coffee, which appeared in Marseille in 1626, becomes popular. In 1669 the ambassador of the Ottoman Empire ordered it on a visit.
- 1661
January 20: The Molière troupe is installed in the Palais-Royal.
March 3–7: Mazarin's will and testament include the foundation of the Collège des Quatre-Nations for the education of sixteen young nobles from the recently annexed provinces (Alsace, Pignerol, Artois, Roussillon). Built by Le Vau, it is presently the Institut de France.
- 1662
February 14: Inauguration of the Salle des Machines (hall of spectacles) in Tuileries. Paul de Gondy, Cardinal de Retz, exiled in Rome since 1654, announces his resignation as Archbishop of Paris.
March: Letters patent accord to Laudati de Caraffa, Italian abbé, the privilege to create upright torch and lantern holders to help traveling Parisians through the night.
March 18: Inauguration of the first public transport line from the porte Saint-Antoine to Luxembourg. Designed by Pascal, this "five floored carriage" disappeared in 1677.
March 30: Letters patent for the establishment of the Royal Academy of Dance.
June 5–6: Grand carrousel is held, which lends its name to the square between the Louvre and Tuileries.
June 6: The king purchases the Gobelins factory.
- 1663
January 6: Banquet at the Louvre ends with the performance of Molière's *L'Ecole des femmes* (The school for wives).
February 3: First meeting of the Académie Royale des Médailles.
February 8: Organization of the Académie Royale de Peinture by Louis XIV and Colbert.
October 30: Consecration of the church of the Prémontrés monastery of Saint-Sacrement on the Croix-rouge square.
- 1664
May 6–13: Festival on l'Ile Enchantée.

1665

First exhibition of the works of members of the Académie Royale de Peinture opens. This is the origin of the Salons. The first booklet is printed for the exhibition of 1673.

January 5: First issue of *Journal des Savants*.

October: Letters patent are issued to create the Manufacture Royale des Glaces (Royal Glass Manufactory) in Reuilly.

1666

December 22: Installation of the Académie des Sciences.

1667

February 17: The number of print shops is reduced to 36 in order to better control the production of books.

March: Foundation of the Observatoire.

June 21: Astronomical observations determine the site of the Observatoire, which in turn becomes the locus of the Meridian of Paris. The main work is completed in 1672 with additional work continuing until 1683.

September 2: An ordinance to light the city empowers La Reynie to install 2,736 lanterns to be divided among 912 streets.

1669

June 28: Letters patent for the Académie Royale de Musique awarded to Pierre Perrin. Lully gets his hands on the academy on March 13, 1672. It is the ancestor of the Opéra.

1670

June 7: Demolition of the walls of Charles V and Louis XIII is ordered in order to create tree-lined boulevards in their place.

1671

January 17: *Psyché*, a work by Molière, Quinault, Corneille, and Lully, is presented at the Salle des Machines in the Tuileries.

February 10: Louis XIV abandons Paris for Versailles.

March 11: Council ruling orders the construction of a boulevard and a new course on the site of the fortifications. It is planned to decorate the project with monumental gates to the glory of the king.

November 30: Laying of the first stone for the Hôtel des Invalides. Its construction is entrusted to Libéral Bruant and it is inaugurated in October 1674.

December: Foundation of the Académie Royale d'Architecture.

1672

February: Creation of the first café at the Saint-Germain fair.

April: First issue of *Mercure galant*, to become *Mercure de France*. The first articles on fashion will begin in 1678.

1673

March 17: Council rules for the construction of the Neuf quai, which will become the quai Le Pelletier.

1676

November: Those who have a tennis court are authorized to play billiards, the new fashion.

1677

November: Construction begins of the colonnade designed by Perrault at the Louvre. It is for the most part finished in 1682.

1680

August 18: The Comédie-Française is established.

1682

November: The Collège de Clermont becomes the Collège Royal de Louis-le-Grand.

1685

Beginning of the fashion for *café au lait*. Madame de Sévigné speaks of it in a letter of December 17, 1688.

April 17: Council ruling orders the destruction of the porte Saint-Marcel and the paving of the rue de la Contrescarpe to better connect the quartier Saint-Victor with the quartiers Saint-Marcel, Saint-Jacques, and Saint-Michel.

July 4: The state buys the Hôtel de Vendôme and the Capucin monastery with the view to creating the place Louis-le-Grand (Vendôme).

August 20: Jules Hardouin-Mansart presents his plans for the future place des Victoires to the Bureau de Ville.

October 22: Parliament records the edict of Fontainebleau of October 18 concerning the revocation of the edict of Nantes. The same day sees the beginning of the demolition of the Temple de Charenton.

October 25: Laying of the first stone of the pont Royal, which will replace the pont Rouge. It is completed in 1689.

1686

March 28: Inauguration of the place des Victoires. There is nothing but the statue of the king in the center; future buildings are represented by painted backdrops.

1687

November 8: Council ruling orders the opening of the rue du Cardinal-Lemoine.

1689

July 14: Inauguration in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville of the statue of Louis XIV by Coysevox, the only one to survive the Revolution. It is found today in the Musée Carnavalet.

September 18: Incarceration in the Bastille of a man who wears "a mask of black velvet." Voltaire creates from it the legend of the "iron mask" in *Le Siècle de Louis XIV*.

1692

February: Creation of the office of Lieutenant General of the King by the city government, Provost, and Viscount of Paris. Jean-Baptiste Le Ragois is the first of four to hold the title up to 1789.

1697

June: Banning of the Italian comedy after the production of *La Fausse prude* at the Hôtel de Bourgogne by the Italian comedians. In deference to Madame de Maintenon, the king allows for their return.

1699

April: Modifications begin at the place Louis-le-Grand (Vendôme). At its inauguration in August, many of the buildings that surround the square are mere façades.

1701

December: Edict to divide the city into twenty *quartiers de police* for the Commissaires du Châtelet, which are superimposed onto the sixteen quartiers of the Hôtel de Ville. Another edict provides for the "caretaking of the lanterns and for the cleaning of the streets."

1702

February 17: Council ruling for the new division of the city into twenty quartiers.

- 1704
October 18: Council ruling orders the extension of the tree-lined boulevard to the quartier de Saint-Germain-des-Prés and the creation of the quai de la Grenouillère (d'Orsay).
- 1706
August 28: The archbishop in the presence of the king consecrates the Eglise des Invalides.
- 1709
January 5: Twenty-four to thirty thousand people lose their lives in one month, as fresh water supplies for the city are interrupted by freezing of the Seine in exceptionally cold weather (-40°C).
March 15: The melting of the river causes a great flood.
- 1713
March 14: Council ruling fixes the new plan for the quartier Gaillon: the extension of the rue Saint-Augustin and the laying of the rue Neuve-des-Petits-Champs.
- 1714
August 7: Council ruling prohibits the construction of the stretch of boulevards from the porte Saint-Honoré and from the porte Saint-Antoine without the authorization of the Bureau de Ville.
- 1715
September 2: Parliament annuls the testament of Louis XIV, who died the day before. Philippe d'Orléans becomes regent. On the 12th, the young Louis XV presides over a *lit de justice* validating the regency.
December 31: Ordinance authorizes the first public ball, the Bal Masqué de l'Opéra.
- 1716
May 2: Foundation by John Law of the first private bank, the Banque Générale de Dépôt, de Change, et d'Escompte.
May 18: Triumphant return of the Italian comedians, driven out in 1697. Luigi Riccoboni gives his first performance at the Palais-Royal, in the Opéra Regent. On June 1, the Italians are installed at the Hôtel de Bourgogne.
- 1717
September 4: Law founds the Compagnie d'Occident, called "le Mississippi."
September 16: The brothers Pâris create the company l'Antisystème to rival Law's.
- 1718
July 10: Construction begins on the Hôtel d'Evreux (Palais de l'Elysée), which is completed in 1720.
December 4: Establishment of Law's bank as the Royal Bank.
- 1719
August 26: Law's company, the Ferme Générale des Impôts, is auctioned off.
- 1720
Jean-Antoine Watteau paints his *Gersaint's Shopsign*.
The place Louis-le-Grand (Vendôme), begun in 1685, is now completed.
March 24: A run on Law's bank, at the rue Quincampoix, ends in its closure.
July 10: A mob wishing to exchange their bank notes for money attack the Banque Royale on the rue Vivienne.
October 10: Council ruling abolishes all monetary use of bank notes from Law's bank. The banker flees for Bruxelles on December 12.
- 1721
July 20: Creation of a school of oriental languages at the Collège Louis-le-Grand, the "young language graduates" destined for commerce in the Levant.
October 12: The bandit Louis-Dominique Cartouche is arrested. Executed on November 28, he is the first French brigand to become a popular hero like Robin Hood in England. The French comedians visit the Châtelet in order to play his character as faithfully as possible in Legrand's play, *Cartouche ou les voleurs*, which is presented to great success on October 14.
- 1722
Construction of the Palais Bourbon begins. It is completed in 1728.
June 15: The king and court return to Versailles.
- 1723
February 23: Royal regulations renew the obligation of printers to work only in the quartier of the University. It is permitted to have a boutique at the Palais de Justice and to sell prayer books around Notre-Dame.
- 1724
Birth of the first French club, the Club de l'Entresol, which meets every week at the abbé Alary's, on the mezzanine of the hotel of president Hénault on the place Louis-le-Grand (Vendôme). Considered a source of opposition, it is closed by the police in 1731.
July 18: Royal declaration sets the limits of Paris and the limitation of its growth. It is completed in the declarations of January 29, 1726, and of March 23 and September 28 of 1728.
September 24: Reopening of the Exchange, closed since 1720, in the Hôtel de Nevers on the rue Vivienne. The exchange agents constitute a monopoly.
- 1728
January 16: The first street signs (of "two sheets of white iron on which is the name of the street in large black letters") are created. The ordinance of July 30, 1729, replaces the easily stolen sheets with engraved stone tablets.
- 1733
Creation of the Société du Caveau by Collé, the Crébillon sons, Piron, and others in a cabaret on the rue de Buci, distant ancestor of the modern music cabaret.
- 1737
Institution of painting and sculpture salons.
- 1738
Creation of the porcelain factory in Vincennes, transferred in 1756 to Sèvres.
- 1739
August 29: A party is given for the marriage of Louise-Elisabeth, daughter of Louis XV, and the infant of Spain. An explosion of fireworks kills about forty people.
- 1740
July 31: It is permitted to construct carriage houses in the Faubourg Saint-Honoré.

1743

First mention of a trademark in the statutes of the guild of woodworkers to guarantee the quality of their furniture crafted in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine.

1745

Birth of the first long-lasting journal of advertisement, the *Affiches de Paris*.

March 26: First edition of the *Encyclopédie*.

1747

February 11: Many in the crowd are killed and injured in a commotion during the fireworks show for the marriage of the Dauphin.

February 14: Daniel Trudaine creates the Ecole des Ponts et Chaussées, an engineering school.

August 23: First prizes given in a general competition among the students of the senior classes of the colleges. The institution exists today.

1749

In the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, Garon creates the first leather shop using the Moroccan methods of curing.

March: Exhibition at the Saint-Germain fair of the first rhinoceros to be seen in Paris.

1751

January 22: Creation of the Ecole Militaire.

1752

Debut of the “Querelles des Bouffons” concerning the future of opera.

January 31: The archbishop condemns the *Encyclopédie*.

1753

July 20: The king approves the plan for the place Louis xv (place de la Concorde) conceived by Boffrand and entrusted to Gabriel.

1759

January: Birth of the first French periodical for women, the *Journal des dames*.

1760

June 9: The first mail delivery to serve the capital begins. The courier distributes nine times a day in the city and its suburbs, for a fee of 2 sols.

August 9: Definition of a new line of demarcation for the southwest follows the boulevards d’Enfer, Saint-Jacques, de la Santé, de la Glacière, des Gobelins, and de l’Hôpital.

1762

Voltaire begins a campaign, which will become known as the Calas Affaire, to clear the name of a Protestant falsely accused of killing his own son for converting to Catholicism.

November 25: Letters patent are issued for the building of the rue de Viarmes around the new Halle au Blé (today the Bourse de Commerce) completed in 1767.

1763

April 6: The Salle du Palais-Royal is destroyed by fire. The Opéra is installed for seven years in the Salle des Machines in the Tuileries.

June 20: The statue of the king in the place Louis xv is inaugurated during a great festival.

1764

April 3: Laying of the first stone of the church of the Madeleine, completed in 1842.

September 6: Laying of the first stone of the new church of Sainte-Geneviève (Panthéon). It is completed in 1790.

October 2: Laying of the first stone of the arcade for the new place Saint-Sulpice.

1765

Boulangier opens the first “restaurant” (offering a choice of bouillon, meats, and egg dishes), thereby competing with caterers and innkeepers. The first actual restaurant is not created until 1786.

1767

May 12: Letters patent ban the construction in the quartier of the Louvre, so that the king may create a square between the colonnade and the church of Saint-Germain-l’Auxerrois.

July 31: Letters patent are issued for the construction of the quai Saint-Michel.

September 18: Council ruling allows for the construction on the quai de Conti of a new Hôtel des Monnaies, planned in 1765 for the place Louis xv (place de la Concorde).

1768

First successful magazine for children, the *Journal d’éducation*, begins publishing.

April: Creation of the first fashion magazine, the *Courrier de la mode ou Journal du goût*.

September 8: Appearance of a pianoforte in the capital, used by Mlle Le Chantre.

1769

September 6: First project for public toilets in the capital. A few years later, after the fitting out of the Palais-Royal, the duc d’Orléans installs twelve pay lavatories.

1770

January 25: Inauguration of the new Salle des Spectacles in the Palais-Royal.

May 30: Parties given for the marriage of the Dauphin and Marie-Antoinette end in catastrophe as a jostling in the crowd crushes 130 people.

December 15: Letters patent are issued for the opening of the rue de Provence. It is built in 1775.

1772

September 22: The pont de Neuilly is destroyed.

1773

August 13: Council ruling for the opening of the rue Taitbout, built in 1775.

1774

March 28: Inauguration of the Halle aux Veaux in the jardin des Bernardins.

1776

January 12: Burning of the Palais de Justice; the Sainte-Chapelle narrowly escapes.

March 10: Royal declaration secularizes the cemeteries in the cities. All the urban cemeteries are closed.

August: Emancipation of the fashion merchants. They end their membership in the haberdashery guild and create a community of fashion merchants, feather sellers, and florists.

1777

January 1: First issue of the venerable French daily, the *Journal de Paris*.

April: Creation of a registered service to locate and fill in excavations under the city, the future Service des Carrières, after the collapse of the Ménilmontant and cave-ins around the route d’Orléans.

September 1: The Bélanger plan to restore the parc de Bagatelle for the comte d'Artois is put forth.

1778

March 30: Having returned to Paris after an absence of 28 years, Voltaire is crowned in his box after the great success of his tragedy *Irène*.

April: Edict issued to open the Temple, Saint-Martin, Saint-Denis, and Bonne-Nouvelle boulevards.

1779

August 10: Letters patent are issued for the building of five streets (Racine; Voltaire, later Casimir-Delavigne; du Théâtre-Français, later de l'Odéon; Crébillon; and Regnard) radiating outward from the new Salle du Théâtre-Français (Odéon), over the area that is part of the Hôtel du Prince de Condé.

1781

April 2: First official horse race in the bois de Vincennes.

June 8: The Opéra in the Salle du Palais-Royal, restored in 1770, burns down. It is set up on the boulevard Saint-Martin.

June 17: Letters patent authorize the Duke of Chartres to buy areas bordering the Palais-Royal. They permit the building of three streets that carry the names of his sons, Montpensier, Beujolais, and Valois, and the construction of a theater for Victor Louis that is inaugurated in May 15, 1790.

1782

Construction of the Hôtel de Salm begins. It is completed in 1784.

1783

Creation of the first French circus, in the Faubourg du Temple, by Philip Astley, founder of the modern circus in London.

March 19: Foundation of the Ecole des Mines de Paris.

April 10: Royal declaration imposes limitations on the height of buildings relative to the width of streets. This relation is modified by the August 25, 1784, letters patent.

July 8: Royal declaration demands that new streets are at least 30 feet wide.

August 20: Laying of the first stone of the new straw and hay market in the couture Sainte-Catherine.

August 27: The hot-air balloon, *Le Globe*, inflated by Charles and Robert Montgolfier, takes off from the Champ-de-Mars. With no one onboard, it lands in Gonesse, where the priest performs an exorcism on it before it is destroyed by parishioners.

November 21: First human flight in the history of mankind. Pilâtre de Rozier and the marquis d'Arlandes take off from the parc de la Muette in a hot-air balloon and land in Butte-aux-Cailles. Charles and Robert, leaving from the Tuileries, follow into the air on the first of December.

1784

October 23: The Théâtre Beaujolais (today the Théâtre du Palais-Royal), intended for marionette shows, is inaugurated.

1785

Closing of the Cemetery of Saints-Innocents. The church is closed in 1786 and demolished in 1787.

January 23: Approval of a project by Ledoux for the construction of the Farmers-General Wall. All but the gates is completed in 1788.

July: Creation by Barthélemy Turquin of the first swimming school at the pont de la Tournelle, where four boats moored together create a pool in the Seine.

1786

In the Palais-Royal, Antoine Beauvilliers opens the first restaurant.

April 8: Letters patent are issued to open the rue Le Peletier.

September: Edict ordering the destruction of the buildings constructed on the bridges and along certain quays. It is effective in 1788.

1787

Duke of Chartres sells the arcades of the Palais-Royal to a variety of businesses, mostly restaurants and cafés. In 1790, thirty-seven buyers have acquired 167 arcades.

February 27: An auction is held for the construction of the pont Louis XVI (pont de la Concorde).

1788

May 8: "May Edicts" introduced by Brienne, including the remodeling of the Parlement.

June: Noble revolt against the "May Edicts."

July 21: Assembly of the three orders of Dauphiné at Vizille.

August 8: Estates-General convoked for May 1789.

August 16: Partial state bankruptcy: payments from the treasury suspended.

August 24–26: Brienne resigns; Necker reappointed.

September 25: Parlements restored. Paris Parlement demands "forms of 1614" for meeting of the Estates-General.

December 27: Doubling of the Third Estate decreed.

1789

The first stage of the Revolution begins with the defecting of the Third Estate from the Estates General and the forming of the National Assembly. On June 20, members of the Third Estate, having declared a new government in the form of the National Assembly, take the Tennis Court Oath to form a new constitution. The storming of the Bastille on July 14 solidifies the National Assembly as the legislative body of France. The "Great Fear" begins in late July, inspiring the National Assembly to completely disassemble the manorial system. Due to the reforms of the "August days" by the end of the month, all members of French society become equal under the law, codified in the Declaration of the Rights of Man. Louis XVI refuses to sanction the document until the crowd descends on Versailles on October 5. He and his family are then escorted back to Paris to be more closely watched by the citizenry.

May 5: First issue of the *Moniteur universel* created by Panckoucke to cover the Estates-General. Put out daily, it is the official journal of the state from December 28, 1799, to the end of 1868.

August 29: First issue of the *Journal des débats*, which covers the debates of the National Assembly. It disappears in 1944.

1790

May 21: Municipal decree replaces the sixteen districts with forty-eight sections.

July 14: Festival of the Fédération in the Champ de Mars.

1791

April 3: Transformation of the church of Sainte-Geneviève into the Panthéon. Mirabeau is the first to be buried here on April 4, followed by Voltaire on July 11.

June 20–21: The royal family flees during the night. They are brought back on the 25th.

July 17: Petition in favor of the Republic in Champ de Mars. The National Assembly orders the mayor to disperse the crowd. Bailly declares martial law as the national guard fires into the crowd, killing about fifty people.

1792

April 15: Fête de la Liberté organized by the Commons in honor of the Swiss of Châteaueux.

April 25: First execution by guillotine. The bandit Nicolas Pelletier is decapitated in the place de Grève.

June 20: The sans-culottes invade the Tuileries. The king allows a woollen cap to be put on his head and drinks a glass of wine to the health of the nation.

July 20: Calling volunteers for the army. On the 21st, proclamation that “the country is in danger.”

August 3: The National Assembly through a petition with names from 46 of the 48 sections demands the deposition of the king.

August 10: Insurrection: taking of the Tuileries and suspension of the king.

September 19: Decree from the Assembly lays out the legislation for elections to create a legal municipality for Paris.

September 21: Proclamation of the Republic by the new Assembly, the Convention.

1793

Jacques-Louis David unveils his *Marat at His Dying Breath*.

January 21: Execution of Louis XVI, at the place de la Révolution (place de la Concorde).

March 10: The Revolutionary Tribunal of Paris is created. The insurrection directed by Jacques Roux fails.

May 31: The sans-culottes invade the Convention, calling in vain for the arrests of the Girondins.

October 5: The republican calendar is adopted.

November 8: The Louvre museum opens.

November 10: Fête de la Raison is held at Notre-Dame.

November 23: All churches in the capital are closed.

December 9: A revolutionary Parisian army is created.

1794

March 30: Danton, Desmoulins, and their cohorts are arrested. They are executed on April 5.

June 8: The Festival of the Supreme Being, Robespierre’s grand achievement, is held.

June 11: Decrees instigate the Terror. From June 11 to July 27, the Revolutionary Tribunal condemns 1,367 to death.

July 27: The Convention votes to indict Robespierre and his partisans. The Commune attempts an insurrection. The Robespierriests are guillotined on the 28th.

August 29: First demonstrations on the boulevards of the “gilded youth” hostile to the sans-culottes.

October 10: Decree creates the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers.

October 22: Opening of the Ecole Centrale des Travaux Publics (the future Ecole Polytechnique), created by decree on March 11.

1795

Januray 20: The Ecole Normale Supérieure opens.

March 30: The Ecole Nationale des Langues Orientales Vivantes (National school of living oriental languages) is created.

October 5: An insurrection of the Royalists is suppressed by General Bonaparte.

October 11: Paris is divided into twelve municipalities. The department of Paris becomes the department of the Seine.

October 25: The Institut de France is created.

1797

July: The Parisian publisher Louis-Etienne Herhan develops monotype printing.

October 22: Garnerin makes the world’s first parachute jump from a hot-air balloon at an altitude of 700 meters over the plain of Monceau.

1798

September 21: Opening of the first national exposition of industrial products in the Champ-de-Mars.

1799

June 18: Coup d’etat of the Council, dominated by the neo-Jacobins, against the directors, two of whom are pressured to resign.

October 16: Bonaparte returns from Egypt.

November 9–10: Bonaparte stages a coup d’etat, thereby dissolving the Council and the Directory.

December 15: The consulate proclaims a new constitution with Bonaparte as premier consul.

1800

February 13: The Banque de France is created.

February 17: New administrative organization of Paris includes twelve mayors of the arrondissement, appointed and without power, two prefects, of the police and of the Seine, and a consul general of the Seine functioning as a municipal consul.

February 19: Bonaparte sets himself up in the Tuileries, which Percier and Fontaine begin to restore.

October 10: A plot to assassinate Bonaparte is uncovered. Ceracchi and his accomplices are arrested, judged, and guillotined.

December 24: An attempted assassination of Bonaparte on the rue Saint-Niçaise fails.

1801

La Tynna creates the *Almanach du commerce de Paris*. It continues to 1819, published by Sébastien Bottin. Today it is known as *Bottin*.

March 12: A ruling by the prefect of the Seine declares the creation of three cemeteries outside the city; to the north (Montmartre), to the east (Père-Lachaise), and to the south (Montparnasse).

March 15: A law is passed to construct three bridges: Austerlitz, Saint-Louis, and des Arts.

September 18: National industrial exposition is opened in the courtyard of the Louvre.

October 9: Consulate decree to open the rues de Castiglione, des Pyramides, and de Rivoli.

1802

April 8: Nomination of the archbishop Mgr. de Belloy.

April 18: The Concordat is promulgated in Notre-Dame.

May 19: Decree orders the digging of the canal de l’Ourcq.

July 2: Ruling declares the construction of the quai d’Orsay.

1803

August 9: Demonstration on the Seine of Fulton’s steamboat.

September 24: The Musée Napoléon opens. The pont des Arts is opened to pedestrians (5 centimes toll per person).

1804

March 9: Cadoudal arrested upon his arrival to Paris for preparing an assassination attempt on Bonaparte. He is judged and executed with his accomplices on June 28.

March 21: The duc d'Enghien is executed in the moat of the Château de Vincennes.

May 18: Bonaparte proclaims himself emperor of France under the name Napoleon I.

July 15: First distribution of the Legion of Honor at the Invalides.

December 2: Coronation of Napoleon I at Notre-Dame.

1805

February 4: Decree is issued on the numbering of the streets, which begins at the Seine, even numbers on the right, uneven on the left.

1806

January 1: Reestablishment of the Georgian calendar.

March 27: Decision is made to create an iron bridge facing the Ecole Militaire, christened the pont d'Iéna on January 13, 1807.

July 7: Laying of the first stone of the Arc de Triomphe at the Etoile, inaugurated in 1836.

November 24: Opening of the pont d'Austerlitz.

December 2: At Posen Napoleon issues decree for the construction of a monument "to the soldiers of the Grande Armée," the Temple de la Gloire (the former, and subsequent, church of the Madeleine).

1807

March 5: Opening of the avenue de l'Observatoire.

July 29: Decree reduces the number of theaters to eight: Opéra, Opéra-Comique, Théâtre-Français, Théâtre de l'Impératrice (Odéon), Vaudeville, Variétés, Ambigu, Gaîté. Later the Opéra Italien, le Cirque Olympique, and the Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin are added.

1808

March 11: Decision to construct the quai des Invalides.

March 24: Laying of the first stone for the Bourse, designed by Brongniart. It opens in

1827.

December 2: Celebrations are held for the arrival of water in the canal de l'Ourcq and also for the laying of the first stone of the fountain in the place de la Bastille, which is to be ornamented with a statue of an elephant. It is left as a model in wood covered with plaster.

1809

March 29: Decree is issued for the construction of the quai de Catinat (de l'Archevêché).

1810

February 5: Limitation of publishers to only sixteen.

April 4: Laying of the first stone of the palace of the Ministère des Relations Extérieures on the quai d'Orsay, completed in 1838.

August 15: Inauguration of the Vendôme Column.

1811

August 15: Laying of the first stone for the Halle aux Vins and of the market at Saint-Martin-des-Champs.

August 26: Construction of a new building for the Hôtel des Postes at the corner of the rues de Castiglione and de Rivoli. Completed in 1822, it is assigned to the Ministry of Finance (burned by the Communards in May 1871).

1812

March 1: Free water at public fountains.

1813

August 15: Opening of the canal de l'Ourcq for navigation between Claye and Paris.

1814

March 30: Battle of Paris. Marmont and Mortier defend the city against the Allies. Surrender is signed on the 31st, at two in the morning.

April 1: The Council General of the Seine requests the return of Louis XVIII, under the initiative of Bellart.

April 6: Abdication of Napoleon. The Senate appeals to Louis XVIII.

May 3: Entrance of Louis XVIII into the capital occupied by the armies of the coalition.

1815

March 19: At midnight, Louis XVIII flees. During the evening of the 20th Napoleon resumes residence at the Tuileries.

June 22: Second abdication of Napoleon.

July 6: Entrance of the allied troops, followed by Louis XVIII on the 8th.

1816

March 21: Reestablishment of the four Académies, with purging of twenty-two of their members.

August 20: Launching at Bercy of the steamship *Charles-Philippe*, constructed by Jouffroy d'Abbans to serve the Paris-Montereau line.

December: Introduction of gaslight. First used by a café in the passage des Panoramas.

1817

March 22: Brawl on the opening night of Arnault's *Germanicus*. The show is banned.

July 8: Opening of the roller coaster Promenades Aériennes, or "Russian Mountains," in the Beaujon garden.

1818

Theodore Géricault unveils his *Raft of the Medusa*.

March 20: Fire at the Odéon theater. It is reconstructed and inaugurated on October 1, 1819.

April 5: First demonstration in the Luxembourg gardens of the dandy-horse, ancestor of the bicycle.

November 15: Inauguration of the church of Saint-Ambroise.

1820

February 13: Assassination of the duc de Berry by Louvel, at the exit of the Opéra on the rue de Richelieu.

May 3: Laying of the first stone of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts.

August 13: Construction begins of a new Salle d'Opéra on the rue Le Peletier.

1821

May 14: Opening of the canal Saint-Denis.

August 16: Opening of the new Salle de l'Opéra on the rue Le Peletier.

December 26: Order to restore the Panthéon to religious use under its former name of Sainte-Geneviève.

1822

Eugène Delacroix unveils *The Bark of Dante*.

March 5: Inauguration of the synagogue on the rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth.

May 3: Work on the canal Saint-Martin begins.

July 1: Inauguration of the Diorama de Daguerre et Bouton on rue Samson.

July 15: Opening of the Café de Paris, at the corner of the boulevard des Italiens and the rue Taitbout.

1823

July 2: Debut of the actor Frédérick Lemaître in *L'Auberge des Adrets*, a melodrama that he saves from failure by his portrayal of the character Robert Macaire.

August 5: Laying of the first stone of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette.

1824

August 25: Laying of the first stone of the church of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul.

October: Opening of the first candy shop chain, La Belle Jardinière, founded by Pierre Parissot.

December 13: First price tag in France, in the shop La Fille d'Honneur, at 26 rue de la Monnaie.

1825

June 3: First attempt at public gas lighting, in the place Vendôme.

November 4: Inauguration of the canal Saint-Martin. It is opened to barges on November 15, 1826.

November 30: Funeral at Notre-Dame-de-Lorette and burial at Père-Lachaise of General Foy, amid a large demonstration by the liberal opposition.

1826

Creation of the first regular line of steamships along the Seine, between Paris and Saint-Cloud.

Founding of the publishing house of Louis Hachette.

July 16: Founding by Maurice Alhoy of the journal *Le Figaro*, the oldest continually published daily newspaper.

October 21: Funeral of Talma, favorite actor of Napoleon. Followed by tens of thousands of political opponents, his remains are conducted to Père-Lachaise without stopping at a church.

November: Inauguration of the Palais de la Bourse.

1827

March 12: Passing of a bill curtailing freedom of the press, described by *Le Moniteur* as the "law of love and justice."

April 29: Review of the national guard on the Champ-de-Mars. Upon passing Charles x, the guard cries "Down with ministers! Down with Jesuits! Long live the Constitution! Long live freedom of the press!" The king dissolves the national guard.

June 30: Arrival to the Jardin des Plantes of a giraffe offered to Charles x by the pasha of Egypt, the first seen by Parisians.

November 19–20: Agitation during the legislative elections. Barricades in the Quartiers Saint-Martin and Saint-Denis.

1828

April 11: The omnibus, a carriage with nineteen or twenty seats, begins service, for 25 centimes a ride.

1829

January 1: The rue de la Paix is lit by gaslight.

October 15: First issue of the journal *Le Temps*.

1830

February 25: The tumultuous premier of Victor Hugo's *Hernani* at the Théâtre-Français sparks a heated debate between romantics and conservatives.

March 16: The king addresses 221 deputies of the opposition. Beginning of intense political unrest.

July: Columns with double uses, for posting public announcements and as urinals, mark the first try at public toilets on the boulevards. They are adopted in 1841.

July 25: Publication of three ordinances: dissolution of the chamber of deputies, changing of election rules, and the suppression of freedom of the press. On the 26th, opposing journalists meet at the head office of the National.

July 27–29: "Les Trois Glorieuses," three-day insurrection against Charles x. The victorious insurgents set up a provisional government at the Hôtel de Ville.

July 31: The duc d'Orléans accepts the position of lieutenant general of the realm. He becomes king of France on August 9 as Louis-Philippe 1.

December 15: Beginning of the trial against the ministers of Charles x. Despite rioting on the 21st and 22nd, they are not condemned to death but sentenced to life in prison.

1831

Victor Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris* is published.

February 14: Rioting breaks out during the celebration service commemorating the anniversary of the death of the duc de Berry. The church of Saint-Germain-l'Auxerrois is sacked and the archdiocesan residence is burned down.

July 27: Laying of the first stone for the July Column, a memorial to the victims of the Trois Glorieuses.

October 1: Louis-Philippe leaves the Palais-Royal. He is installed in the Tuileries.

November 19: Charles Philipon condemned to six months in prison and fined 2,000 francs for making Louis-Philippe look like a pear in *La Caricature*.

1833

December 23: The obelisk of Luxor arrives from Egypt. It is erected on October 25, 1836.

1834

April 12–14: Republican insurrection. It ends with the massacre of the inhabitants of 12 rue Transnonain by soldiers.

June 14: Enormous success of the character Robert Macaire, as played by Frédérick Lemaître.

October 30: Inauguration of the pont du Carrousel.

1835

Honoré de Balzac publishes *Old Goriot*.

July 28: Assassination attempt by Fieschi on the boulevard du Temple. His "infernal machine" misses Louis-Philippe but kills eighteen people, including field marshal Mortier.

November 12–14: Trial of Lacenaire, romantic assassin whose *Mémoires* are an enormous success.

1836

July 1: Emile de Girardin publishes the first cheaply priced daily, *La Presse*. His competition, *Le Siècle*, created by Armand Dutacq, comes out the same day.

July 29: Inauguration of the Arc de Triomphe with François Rude's great relief *The Departure of the Volunteers of 1792*.

December 15: Consecration of the church of Notre-Dame-de-Lorette.

1837

August 26: Opening of the Paris–Saint-Germain-en-Laye rail line. The station is on the rue de Londres; the journey takes a half-hour.

1838

January 7: Opening of Louis-Philippe's Spanish Gallery in the Louvre.

March 5: Opening of a lane linking the rue des Archives and the rue Montorgueil, the future rue Rambuteau.

1839

August 2: The Paris-Versailles rail line, running along the right bank of the Seine, opens to passengers.

September 7: Daguerre makes experimental daguerreotypes at the palais du quai d'Orsay, renewed on the 11th and 14th.

1840

May 16: Inauguration of the new Salle de l'Opéra-Comique on the place Favart.

July 28: Inauguration on the place de la Bastille of a monument to the memory of the combatants of July 1830.

October 1: Beginning use of gas stoves in kitchens on the rue Duperré.

December 15: Transfer of Napoleon 1's remains to the Invalides.

December 24: Princess Hélène de Mecklembourg, wife of Ferdinand-Philippe, duc d'Orléans introduces the German custom of the Christmas tree.

1841

April 3: A law is issued for the creation of a ring of fortifications to protect the capital. Called for by Thiers, acting president of the Council, this wall is completed in 1845.

May 3: Law of expropriation in the case of public need, legal instrument essential for urban redevelopment.

1842

May 8: First railway catastrophe in France, on the Versailles Left Bank line, at the height of Meudon: fifty-seven die, including Dumont d'Urville, and three hundred injured.

July 13: Death of the duc d'Orléans, heir to the crown, in a carriage accident.

1843

March 4: First issue of *L'Illustration*, created by Alexandre Paulin, Adolphe Joanne, and Edouard Charton in the style of the *Illustrated London News*.

April 22: Triumph at the Odéon of the classical tragedy by Ponsard, *Lucrèce*, turning the tide against romanticism. The premier of *Les Burgraves* by Hugo on March 7 at the Théâtre-Français is a resounding failure.

July 7: Inauguration of the quai Henry IV, on the right bank of the Ile Louviers.

1844

March 16: Opening of the Musée de Cluny.

October 21: Inauguration of the church of Saint-Vincent-de-Paul. Construction began in 1824.

November 14: Creation of the first day-care center in Chaillot by Jean-Baptiste Marbeau.

1845

April 22: Musical joust in the Champ de Mars. The "saxophone" invented by Adolphe Sax triumphs over its competitors. It is adopted by the military orchestra and patented on June 22, 1846.

July 4: Opening of the Hippodrome on the Barrière de l'Etoile. It burns on July 27, 1846.

November 29: Laying of the first stone of the Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, on the quai d'Orsay.

1846

January 7: Completion of the Gare du Nord train station. The railway line from the station is inaugurated on June 14.

June 7: Inauguration of the Paris–Sceaux railway line.

1847

Publication of *Scènes de la vie de bohème* by Henri Murger, first to describe the bohemian lifestyle of Paris.

February 19: Inauguration in the Théâtre Historique by the elder Alexandre Dumas of his drama *La Reine Margot*.

June 28: Prefect decrees the complete renumbering of all the properties on public roads. The operation begins on July 1 and is completed in January 1851. The plaques in enameled porcelain, with white numbers on a blue background, are fixed to building facades.

July 9: Opening of the "banquet campaign," as the opposition subverts a government ban on public assembly by organizing "banquets" for as many as 1,200 guests.

1848

Honoré Daumier paints *The Republic* as a symbol of the new, representative government.

February 22–24: Banning of last banquet of the opposition leads to violent demonstrations. Numerous deaths as troops fire on crowd on evening of 23rd; at dawn on 24th, city is covered with barricades, the regime falls, and a republic is proclaimed.

August 1: First "pleasure train" from Paris to Dieppe. Beginning of railway tourism and the traditional exodus of inhabitants of the capital during the month of August.

December 10: Election of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte as the president of the Republic.

1849

July 5: Inauguration of the East railway line.

August 12: Inauguration of the Paris–Lyon railway line.

1850

February 3: Riot on the boulevard Saint-Martin against the digging up of the trees of la Liberté, planted in 1848.

February 24: A wreath to the memory of the victims of the revolution of 1848 is placed at the base of the column at the Bastille. These demonstrations of opposition continue until the prefect of police orders, on March 11, the removal of "all emblems seditious or contrary to police regulations."

1851

June 5: Renovation of the Louvre begins. The first stone of the new wings is laid on July 25, 1852.

September 15: Laying of the first stone of the Pavillon no. 2 of the new central Halles constructed by Victor Baltard.

December 2: Coup d'état of Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, with sporadic resistance in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine and in the Quartier du Temple.

December 10: Decree for the creation of an encircling rail line. The 38 kilometers of track are completed in 1870.

1852

Appearance of the first Parisian magazine, *Au Bon Marché*. Elisa Lemonnier creates the first professional school for girls, where they are taught sewing for the most part.

March 26: Decree on the expropriation of ancient buildings affected by the laying of roads or situated in their way. It is completed by a text of December 27, 1858.

March 28: Foundation of the Banque Foncière de Paris, which becomes on December 10 the Crédit Foncier de France, installed on the rue Neuve-des-Capucines.

April 2: Inauguration of the synagogue on the rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth.

December 2: Proclamation of the Second Empire.

December 11: Inauguration of the Cirque Napoleon, today the Cirque d'Hiver, designed by Hittorff, on the boulevard du Temple.

1853

March 9: Decree to open the rue de Rennes between the boulevard du Montparnasse and the rues de Vaugirard and Notre-Dame-des-Champs.

March 13: Opening of the Hôpital Lariboisière, decided on in 1839, with construction begun in 1846.

November 15: Decree for the opening of avenue Napoléon (later de l'Opéra), whose construction does not begin until 1867.

November 21: First demonstration of the tramway between the quai Debilly (avenue de New York) and the Cours-la-Reine. A line is created along the Concorde to the pont de Sèvres.

December 14: Decree creating the Compagnie Générale des Eaux, a private company charged with the distribution of water.

1854

April 2: First issue of *Figaro* launched by Villemessant.

June 19: Consecration of the church of Saint-Lambert in Vaugirard.

June 24: Laying of the first stone for the church of Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Belleville.

1855

Publication of Gerard de Nerval's *Aurélia*.

May 15: Opening of the Exposition Universelle, with Delacroix and Ingres both given retrospectives. At its closing on November 15, it has played host to five million visitors. Courbet shows his work, including his *Atelier*, in a separate pavilion.

July 5: Opening of the Théâtre des Bouffes-Parisiens under the direction of Jacques Offenbach, at the time facing the Cirque des Champs-Élysées, and later moved on December 29 to the passage Choiseul.

August 11: Decree opening of the boulevards Saint-Michel and Saint-Germain.

1856

June 29: Opening of the Pré-Catelan in the Bois de Boulogne.

October 11: First Paris–Marseille railway link. The P.L.M. company is set up in June 1857.

December 28: Inauguration of the Maison Eugénie-Napoléon on 262 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Antoine, intended for the professional education for poor girls.

1857

Creation of the “Bazar de l'Hôtel de Ville” by Xavier Ruel. Publication of Charles Baudelaire's *Les Fleurs du Mal* and Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*. Public smoking common in cafés, as noted by the author of the *Histoire des cafés de Paris*: “The cigar and the pipe have monopolized everything.”

April 26: Inauguration of the hippodrome of Longchamp.

August 14: Inauguration of the new buildings of the Louvre.

August 29: Decree issued to open the avenue des Amandiers (de la République) and the boulevard du Prince-Eugène (Voltaire).

1858

Birth of haute couture with the installation of Charles Frédéric Worth on 7 rue de la Paix. He becomes the designer for Empress Josephine.

Construction of a chalet (rue de la Cure) for those coming to take the mineral waters of Auteuil, known since the sixteenth century.

January 14: Attempted assassination of Napoleon III as he arrives at the Opéra. He escapes the bombs of Orsini that kill or injure 156 people.

April 5: Inauguration of the boulevard de Sébastopol.

May 19: Passing of bill on the great works of Paris. Over ten years, 180 million francs are dispensed to the city. On November 19, the Caisse des Travaux de Paris is created, under the authority of the prefect of the Seine, Haussmann.

1859

February 16: Decree issued to annex the territories of the surrounding communities inside of the wall of Thiers at the beginning of January 1860.

March 3: Laying of the first stone of the Russian orthodox church on the rue de la Croi-du-Roule (Daru). It is consecrated on September 11, 1861.

August 22: Decree limiting height of buildings, along streets and boulevards 20 meters or more wide, to 20 meters, in effect permitting no more than five floors.

1860

January 1: Paris annexes surrounding communes, increasing the number of arrondissements from twelve to twenty.

August 15: Inauguration of the fountain of Saint-Michel and of the new pont au Change.

October 6: Inauguration of the Jardin d'Acclimatation.

1861

Eugene Delacroix finishes the Saints Anges chapel in the Saint-Sulpice church.

April 25: First issue of the daily *Le Temps*, founded by Auguste Nefftzer.

August 13: Inauguration of the boulevard Malesherbes.

1862

February 1: Creation of the first periodical to cover exclusively the events of the day, *Faits divers*. Soon after comes its competitor *Le Journal illustré*.

July 14: Opening of the perimeter railway to passengers.

July 21: Laying of the first stone of architect Charles Garnier's new Opéra. It is inaugurated on January 5, 1875.

August 19: Inauguration of the Cirque Olympique (Théâtre du Châtelet). The Théâtre-Lyrique, facing the place du Châtelet, opens on October 30.

November 22: First literary dinner at Magny's on the rue Mazet.

December 7: Inauguration of the boulevard du Prince-Eugène (Voltaire).

1863

February 1: Creation of the *Petit Journal*, the least expensive in France (5 centimes), by Moïse-Polydore Millaud.

May 15: The Salon des Refusés, which includes Manet's *Le Déjeuner sur l'herbe*, is held in Paris.

May 31: First Grand Prix de Paris, an equestrian event, at Longchamp.

June 22: Decree accords freedom of work to bakers and withdraws the law limiting the number of bakeries.

1864

May 20: Consecration of Notre-Dame after many years of restoration work led by Viollet-Le-Duc.

December 17: Triumph of *La Belle Hélène*, opera-bouffe by Offenbach, libretto by Meilhac and Halévy, at the Théâtre des Variétés.

1866

September 2: Appearance of beer in cafés, served first at the Café de la Rotonde.

October 31: Triumph of the *La Vie Parisienne* by Offenbach, libretto by Meilhac and Halévy, at the Théâtre du Palais-Royal.

November 4: Opening of the place du Roi-de-Rome (du Trocadéro).

1867

January 1: Opening of the abattoir of La Villette.

March 15: Inauguration of new store, La Ville de Saint-Denis (91-95 rue du Faubourg-Saint-Denis), which boasts the first elevator installed in France.

April 1: Opening of the Exposition Universelle in the Champ de Mars. Appearance, on this occasion, of the first brasseries, a restaurant style borrowed from Germany.

April 14: Service begins for sightseeing boats along the Seine during the Exposition Universelle.

May 1: Opening of the wing for the mentally ill at Sainte-Anne.

October 20: Opening of the livestock market at La Villette.

1868

Creation by the city of a free school of design, the future Ecole des Arts Decoratifs.

May 31: First official bicycling race in the Parc de Saint-Cloud, near Paris.

July 1: First public announcement columns showing posters by Richard and Gabriel Morris.

July 5: First issue of the journal *Le Gaulois*, founded by Henri de Pène and Edmond Tarbé.

1869

Gustave Baudelaire publishes *Paris Spleen*. Jean-Baptiste Carpeaux produces the sculpture *The Dance* for the Opéra.

January 1: First issue of *Journal officiel*.

December 28: Trial of Troppmann, assassin of a family of seven. The affaire arouses a great amount of emotion, and at the execution of the murderer, on January 19, 1870, tens of thousands gathered before the Prison de la Roquette are restrained by two regiments.

1870

The Franco-Prussian War begins. The amphitheater of Lutetia is discovered.

September 4: Napoleon III is captured at the battle of Sedan, and the Third Republic is proclaimed in Paris.

September 19: German forces surround the city and begin a siege that brings months of famine.

September 23: Flight of the first balloon from the besieged city. By the time of the surrender of Paris, sixty-five manned balloons are launched.

November 14: First carrier pigeons used by the French in the siege of Paris.

1871

Paris surrenders to German forces on January 28, but citizens of the city refuse the terms of surrender agreed upon by the French government under Thiers and proclaim the Paris Commune on March 26. This workers' government lasts until May 30, when Thiers's soldiers enter the city and kill 30,000. The Tuileries and the Hôtel de Ville are destroyed by fire.

September: First installation of a Wallace Fountain on the boulevard de La Villette.

1872

January 13: Opening of the Ecole Libre des Sciences Politiques.

January 27: Creation of the Banque de Paris et des Pays-Bas.

September 23: The debate of the Commission Internationale du Mètre begins at the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers. The metric measurement is adopted by most of the countries in the world.

1873

July 24: Law is passed for the erection at the base of Montmartre of a church consecrated as Sacré-Cœur, in atonement for the crimes of the Commune.

1874

April 15: First show of Impressionists at Nadar's photography gallery.

August: First steam-powered trams enter the stations of Montparnasse and Orléans.

August 1: First issue of the *Bulletin* by the Société de l'Histoire de Paris, which was formed on May 7 at the Ecole des Chartes.

September 3: Inauguration of the synagogue on the rue de la Victoire.

1875

January 5: Inauguration of the Opéra constructed by Charles Garnier.

June 15: Laying of the first stone of Sacré-Cœur.

October 7: Forming of the superior council of the Catholic University of Paris.

1876

October 3: Opening of the first workers' congress held in Paris.

October 15: First issue of *Petit Parisien*, created by Louis Andrieux, replaced in August 1944 by *Le Parisien Libéré*.

1877

Claude Monet unveils his Saint-Lazare Station series.

May 12: Law institutes public debates in the municipal council.

October 19: Inauguration of the avenue de l'Opéra.

1878

March 25: Installation of the new Crédit Lyonnais head office on 19 boulevard des Italiens.

May 30: Attempt at electrically lighting the avenue de l'Opéra and the place de l'Etoile.

June 6: Inauguration of the Hôtel Continental.

October 5: Foundation of the Société des Hydropathes in the Latin Quarter, prefiguration of the Chat Noir.

1879

July: The setting up of a telephone system begins.

July 11: Law fixes the width of sidewalks in relation to their streets.

1880

January 3: Spectacular thawing and flooding. The Seine rises almost six feet and in less than three hours carries away the pont des Invalides, which is in the process of being reconstructed.

July 14: First official celebration since 1802 of a national holiday commemorating the storming of the Bastille.

1881

November 18: Opening of the first modern cabaret, Le Chat Noir, by Rodolphe Salis at Montmartre.

1882

January 10: Opening of the Musée Grévin on the passage Jouffroy, a current affairs gallery with wax figures.

April 12: Inauguration of the Musée Ethnographique du Trocadéro.

July 13: Inauguration of the Hôtel de Ville, burned down by the Communards, reconstructed by Théodore Ballu and Pierre Joseph Edouard Deperthes.

July 14: Creation by Louis Bonnet of *L'Auvergnat de Paris*, a journal covering the interests of expatriates from the Massif Central, published daily.

1883

June 16: First issue of the Catholic daily *La Croix*.

July 14: Inauguration of the statue of the Republic in the place of the same name.

September 22: Opening of the first preparatory school for young girls, the Lycée Fénelon.

1884

February 26: First issue of the daily *Le Matin*, which disappears on August 17, 1944.

May 12: Decree on the creation of two new Parisian cemeteries in Bagneux and Pantin.

July 8: Inauguration of the first swimming pool on 31 rue du Château-Landon.

July 23: Law raises to seven the number of floors a building may have.

November 7: Last significant outbreak of cholera.

1885

February 2: Decision by the municipal council: women now admitted as interns to hospitals.

June 1: National funeral for Victor Hugo. He is buried in the Panthéon, which becomes again a temple to the great men of France.

August 3: Laying of the first stone of the new buildings of the Sorbonne.

1886

Georges Seurat unveils *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte*.

April 19: Inauguration in the Trocadéro of a museum of comparative sculpture.

July 1: Inauguration of the Cercle Militaire.

1887

January: Beginning of construction of the Eiffel Tower, which sparks unanimous disapproval from the artistic and literary world.

February 3: Inauguration of the Bourse du Travail on the rue Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

1888

July 30: The municipal council votes to give a credit of a million francs for the construction of an electric system, the beginning of electric lighting of the city.

November 14: Inauguration of the Institut Pasteur on the rue Dutot (du Docteur Roux).

1889

L'Annuaire, the first annual list of telephone numbers of Paris and its suburbs, is published.

April 2: Completion of the Eiffel Tower. Guests walk up the 300 meters. The elevators are not inaugurated until May 19.

May 6: Opening of the Exposition Universelle. Twenty-five million visitors are counted by closing time on November 6.

August 5: Inauguration of the large amphitheater at the new Sorbonne.

November 18: Opening of the municipal school Estienne for the printing trade.

1890

January 20: Foundation of the Touring-Club de France.

April 30: Scandal aroused by Rodin's *Balzac* at the Salon du Champ-de-Mars.

May 1: First unofficial celebration of Labor Day; there is some fighting.

1891

May 20: Inauguration of the professional school of cooking on the rue Bonaparte.

1892

First use of concrete in Paris to construct a building on rue Danton by François Hennebique.

February 29: First attack by the anarchist Ravachol, against the hotel of prince de Sagan on the rue de Berri. He attacks again on March 10 at 136 boulevard Saint-Germain, March 27 at 39 rue de Clichy, and April 25 at the restaurant Véry, where he is finally apprehended.

April 20: Creation by Edouard Drumont of the antisemitic daily *La Libre Parole* at the headquarters on 14 boulevard Montmartre.

October 4: Launching at the Parc Montsouris of the first weather balloon.

1893

January 7: Violence at Tivoli-Wauxhall during a public meeting over the Panama Scandal.

April: Opening of the Buffalo Velodrome at the Maillot gate.

April 7: Foundation of the restaurant Maxim's on the rue Royal.

April 12: Opening of the music hall Olympia on the boulevard des Capucines.

May 11: First bicycling world record. Henri Desgrange covers 35,325 km at the Buffalo Velodrome.

December: Opening of the Winter Velodrome on rue de Suffren in the Galerie des Machines at the Exposition Universelle of 1889.

December 9: Terrorist bombing by the anarchist Auguste Vaillant at the national assembly. Forty-six people are injured.

1894

First soccer championship in France between the six Parisian teams. Standard Athletic Club of Paris wins with eleven British players and one Frenchman.

February 12: Anarchist Emile Henry bombs the café Terminus at the Gare Saint-Lazare.

March 15: Attack on the church de la Madeleine. The anarchist Pauwels is killed by his bomb.

April 4: Anarchist attack against the restaurant Foyot on the rue de Tournon. Many are hurt, including the writer Laurent Tailhade who had hailed "the beauty of Vaillant's act" of December 9, 1893.

June 23: First gold cup at the Buffalo Velodrome.

July 22: World's first automobile race, the Paris-Rouen, is organized by *Le Petit Journal*. The oldest official race is the Paris-Bordeaux of June 10-12, 1895.

October 31: The press picks up the Dreyfus affair.

November 11: Inauguration of the Clichy-Asnières aqueduct to conduct the city's sewage out to the plain d'Archères.

1895

Creation of the Galeries Lafayette by Théophile Bader and Alphonse Kahn. Toulouse-Lautrec decorates the booth of la Goulue at the Foire du Trône.

March 25: Inauguration of the Musée Social, founded by the count de Chambrun on 5 rue Las-Cases.

August 10: Foundation of the Société Gaumont, the first important company to produce films with Pathé.

December 28: World's first public cinematographic showing in the basement of the Grand Café at the corner of the boulevard des Capucines and the rue Scribe. Thirty-eight paying spectators watch the films of Louis Lumière projected by George Méliès.

1896

Alfred Jarry writes *Ubu Roi*. Lichen disappears from the Luxembourg gardens due to air pollution.

April 19: Creation of the Paris-Roubaix bicycle race.

October 6: Tsar Nicolas II lays the first stone for the pont Alexandre III.

1897

First photographs by Eugene Atget for the Municipal Commission for Old Paris.

April 4: Law authorizing women from fifteen to thirty to attend the Ecole des Beaux-Arts. Numerous students protest their admission.

July 13: Inauguration of the Musée de l'Armée aux Invalides.

August 5: Judgment from the Paris tribunal authorizing the constitution of the Académie Goncourt. It awards its first prize in 1903.

September 5: Creation of the first movie theater. Méliès shows movies at his Théâtre Robert-Houdin on the boulevard des Italiens.

1898

January 13: Open letter by Emile Zola to the president of the Republic, "J'Accuse", in *L'Aurore*, proclaiming the innocence of Alfred Dreyfus.

October 26: World's first wireless connection between the Eiffel Tower and the Panthéon, by Eugène Ducretet and Ernest Roger.

1899

June 4: Disturbance surrounding the Dreyfus affair. At the steeplechase of Auteuil, the Baron de Christiani strikes Emile Loubet, president of the Republic.

November 19: Inauguration at the place de la Nation of *Triomphe de la République*, a monument by Jules Dalou.

1900

April 14: Inauguration of the Exposition Universelle and of the pont Alexander III. At its closing, on November 12, the exposition has received more than 15 million visitors.

May 1: Inauguration of the Palais des Beaux-Arts (Grand and Petit Palais).

May 14: Beginning of the second Olympic Games.

July 4: Inauguration of the Gare d'Orsay.

July 19: Beginning service of the No. 1 subway line, Porte de Vincennes-Porte Maillot.

September 15: Opening of the subway from 5:30 A.M. to midnight. Because of the great number of travelers, automatic devices replace ticket punchers.

1901

Construction of the cinema studios of Pathé in Vincennes.

March 15: Inauguration of the Saint-Cloud racetrack.

April 1: Inauguration of the new buildings for the Gare de Lyon.

July 1: Beginning service of the Invalides-Versailles electric line, the first electric train line in Europe.

1902

Claude Debussy composes *Pelléas et Mélisande*.

January 26: First packet of Gitanes cigarettes is sold.

April 23: Beginning of the Humbert affair, in which Matisse's family becomes involved.

May 31: End of the Manda trial and the affaire Casque d'or. On this occasion the journalist Victor Morris coins the term "apache" to compare the savagery of the criminals of the capital with the Apache Indians of North America.

June 4: Opening of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Not yet completed, it is inaugurated on May 29, 1905.

October 16: First identification of a murderer by fingerprints by Alphonse Bertillon, chief of the anthropometry department of the Paris police headquarters.

1903

September 1: Creation of a fashion house by Paul Poiret.

December 20: Opening of the Winter Velodrome in the Galerie des Machines in the Champ de Mars.

1904

Pablo Picasso moves to the Bateau-Lavoir in Montmartre.

April 18: First issue of the socialist daily *L'Humanité*.

May 8: Victory of socialists and radicals in the municipal elections.

August 25: Beginning service of the first “taximètres,” or hackney carriages, the future taxis. The first automobile hackney is put in service on December 20.

October 23: Consecration of the first church constructed in cement, Saint-Jean-l’Evangéliste de Montmartre.

December 25: Inauguration of the Ecole Breguet on the rue Falguière.

1905

The cinema studios of Léon Gaumont are constructed in Buttes-Chaumont. Fauvism flowers at the Salon d’Automne.

1906

January 31: Beginning of the inventory of the clergy. Several incidents occur, the worst at Sainte-Clotilde and at Saint-Pierre-du-Gros-Caillou.

March 22: First rugby match between France and England at the Parc des Princes.

June 11: First gas-powered bus begins service on the Montmartre–Saint-Germain-des-Prés line. It rapidly replaces the horse-drawn omnibus, which makes its last runs on January 12, 1913.

October 23: Flight of *L’Oiseau de Proie*, a plane made by Santos-Dumont. It travels 60 meters at a height of 3 meters at Bagatelle.

November: Creation by Charles and Gabriel Voisin of the world’s first airplane plant at Billancourt. From March 26, 1904, they test their machines at Issy-les-Moulineaux, the oldest airfield in the world.

1907

Pablo Picasso paints *Les Demoiselles d’Avignon*.

March 24: Inauguration of the Colombes stadium, constructed with funds from the journal *Le Matin*. It is entrusted to the Stade Français.

March 25: Creation of the first traffic circle for vehicles at the place de l’Etoile.

1908

Birth of cubism.

1909

May 29: Opening of the amusement park Luna-Park at the Porte Maillot.

1910

Sale of the first Gauloise cigarettes.

February 13: Opening of the Winter Velodrome on boulevard de Grenelle to replace the one at the Galerie des Machines in the Champ de Mars, which will be destroyed.

December 3: First use of neon to illuminate the Grand Palais. The first public sign appears in 1912 on the boulevard Montmartre.

1911

January 24: Departure from Paris of the first car rally to Monte-Carlo.

August 22: Theft of the *Mona Lisa* from the Louvre. It is recovered in Florence on December 13, 1913.

1912

Delaunay shows *La Ville de Paris*.

February 15: Helena Rubinstein’s Maison de Beauté opens on 255, rue Saint-Honoré.

June 1: First world tennis championships at the Faisanderie stadium in Saint-Cloud.

1913

Guillaume Apollinaire publishes *Alcools*; Proust publishes *Swann’s Way*, first volume of *Remembrance of Things Past*.

March 31: Inauguration of a theater on the Champs-Élysées, constructed in reinforced concrete by Auguste Perret, where Stravinsky’s *Sacre du printemps* creates a scandal on May 29.

1914

March 16: Murder of Gaston Calmette, editor of *Figaro*, by Henriette Caillaux. She is acquitted on July 28.

July 31: Raoul Villain murders Jean Jaurès at the Café du Croissant on the rue du Croissant.

August 1: General mobilization. On August 3, war is declared on Germany.

September 6: Taxis requisitioned to transport troops assure the success of the battle of the Marne.

1916

January 29: First bombing by a zeppelin leaves twenty-six dead, thirty-two wounded, at Belleville.

1917

Marcel Duchamp shows his *Fountain*, a urinal presented as an art work.

1918

January 29: Bread rationing, 300 grams per person a day.

January 30: During the night, the first massive aerial attack. Twenty-eight planes bombard the capital, causing 65 deaths and 205 wounded. New bombardments occur on March 8 and 11.

March 23: “Big Bertha” launches eighteen shells into the city, killing fifteen and wounding thirty-six. The last bombardment is on September 16.

November 11: Armistice, end of the war.

1919

February 8: Opening of the world’s first commercial airline route between Paris and London. On March 22, the first regular flights begin between Paris and Brussels.

April 19: Law authorizing the destruction of the fortifications built between 1840 and 1844 surrounding the city. Demolition begins on May 5.

July 14: Grand victory parade from the Maillot gate to the place de la République.

October 16: Consecration of Sacré-Cœur.

1920

August 19: The national assembly votes to allocate 500,000 francs to the construction of a mosque near the Jardin de Plantes.

1921

January 28: Burial of the remains of the Unknown Soldier at the Arc de Triomphe.

November 26: First radio concert aired from the Eiffel Tower.

1922

March 19: Laying of the first stone on the mosque of Paris.

April: Installation of the first traffic light at the intersection of the rue Rivoli and boulevard de Sébastopol.

October 6: The first private radio station, the Concerts Radiola, the future Station Radio-Paris, operates from the boulevard Haussmann.

1923

February 27: First issue of the daily *Paris-Soir*.

1924

The birth of surrealism.

January 22: Driving distances from Paris are calculated using a bronze star that is installed in the courtyard of Notre-Dame as the starting point.

July 5: Opening of the seventh Olympic Games at the Colombes stadium.

1925

April 28: Inauguration of the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes.

July 9: Inauguration of the Cité Universitaire Internationale.

1926

October 18: Louis Lumière presents his first film with sound at the Académie des Sciences.

1927

January 15: Inauguration of the last section of the boulevard Haussmann between the rue Drouot and the rue Taitbout.

May 21: Charles Lindbergh makes the first trans-Atlantic flight (New York to Paris) in *The Spirit of Saint Louis*, landing at Bourget.

December 19: Birth of city heating, with the transfer by the municipal council of the Bercy metropolitan factory to the Compagnie Générale Française de Chauffage Urbain.

1928

February 14: Opening of the Lido.

July 29: Inauguration of the Roland-Garros stadium, constructed to welcome the "mousquetaires" who have come to defend the Davis Cup.

November 9: First issue of *Gringoire*, profascist and antisemitic daily, published by Horace de Carbuccia.

December 4: Arrest of Marthe Hanau, editor of *La Gazette du France*, and the beginning of an economic scandal.

1929

May 2: Laying of the first stone of the Maison de la Mutualité and the corner of the rue Saint-Victor and the rue de Pontoise.

July 28: Victory of France over the United States in the Davis Cup at the Roland-Garros stadium.

October 5: Fighting at the Japy gymnasium. More than one hundred are wounded after communists attack a meeting of Young Socialists.

1930

April 5: Opening of the first kindergarten at the place du Cardinal-Amette.

November 29: Creation of the daily *Je suis partout*.

1931

April 14: World's first public television broadcast carried out by René Barthélemy in the amphitheater of the Ecole Supérieure d'Electricité de Malakoff.

May 6: Inauguration of the Exposition Coloniale in the Bois de Vincennes. By closing time on November 15, almost 33,500,000 visitors.

June 10: Beginning of the Maigret detective-fiction series by Georges Simenon.

1932

Louis Celine publishes *Journey to the End of the Night*.

May 6: Assassination on the rue Berryer of Paul Doumer, president of the Republic, by the White Russian Pavel Gorgoulov.

October 31: Marcel Thil wins the world middleweight championship in boxing at the Parc des Princes.

1933

August 30: Creation of Air France.

December 29: Beginning of the Stavisky affair.

1934

January 3: Inauguration of the first Métro line to the suburbs.

February 6: Riot against parliamentary corruption. Eleven die, more than three hundred wounded.

March 24: Presentation of the first front-wheel drive car, the "7CV," by Citroën.

June 2: Creation of the Vincennes zoo.

1935

April 26: First official television broadcast by the ministry of the P.T.T. on the rue de Grenelle.

July 5: Laying of the first stone of the museum of modern art on the avenue de Tokyo.

July 14: Demonstration by the right, birth of the Popular Front.

1936

Jean Renoir's *The Crime of Monsieur Lange* appears the day before the victory of the Front Populaire on May 3.

May 26: Beginning of a massive wave of strikes.

September 9: Foundation of the Cinémathèque Française by Henri Langlois, Georges Franju, and Jean Mitry.

1937

May 1: First official celebration and national holiday of Labor Day.

May 24: Inauguration of the International Exposition on Arts and Technology.

August 27: Inauguration in Trocadéro of the museum of French monuments.

September 11: Bomb attacks on the offices of the General Confederation of French Employers and of the Union of Mechanical Industry on the rue de Presbourg and rue Boissière.

1938

Jean-Paul Sartre publishes *Nausea*; Marcel Carné's film *Hôtel du Nord* is released.

February 5: Inauguration of the Pierre de Coubertin stadium.

September 30: Edouard Daladier, president of the Council, returns from Munich where he abandoned Czechoslovakia to Hitler.

1939

March 10: Distribution of the first gas masks to the civilian population.

March 19: Signs indicating the whereabouts of bomb shelters.

August 25: Seizure of the Communist journals *L'Humanité* and *Ce Soir* for having written that the Germano-Soviet Pact favored peace.

August 31: Beginning of the evacuation of children from the capital.

September 1: General mobilization and state of siege. War is declared on the 3rd.

1940

February 29: Food stamps are allocated.

June 3: Two hundred and forty-five die and 642 are wounded in a bombing.

June 10: The government leaves for Tours and then Bordeaux. The Germans enter Paris on the 14th.

September 6: Radio Free France broadcasting from London, launches its slogan "Radio-Paris ment, Radio-Paris ment, Radio-Paris est allemand" (Radio Paris lies, Radio Paris lies, Radio Paris is German).

October 18: Institution of a special statute for Jews by the German occupation authority.

December 26: Law adjourns the municipal council.

1941

May 14: Arrest of five thousand Jews of foreign origin.

July 1: Rationing of textiles.

August 20: Opening of the camp at Drancy, internment center for Jews before their deportation.

August 21: Pierre Georges, called Fabien, assassinates a German officer at the Barbès subway station. The occupation authority responds by instituting the policy of hostages.

August 29: Execution at Mount Valérien of the first resistance fighters, among them Honoré d'Estienne d'Orves.

September 2: Oath of loyalty to Marshal Pétain by the Parisian magistrates; only one refuses.

September 16: Execution of the first ten hostages.

1942

March 10: Anti-Nazi demonstration at the Buffon school. Five students are arrested and shot.

April 7: Identity cards issued for everyone seven or over.

May 29: Jews required to wear the yellow Star of David.

July 16–17: Great roundup of Jews. Thirteen thousand people are arrested and locked up in the Winter Velodrome.

1943

February 15: Creation of obligatory service (STO) of two years for all Frenchmen between the ages of twenty and twenty-three.

May 27: First meeting, on the rue du Four, of the national council of the resistance (CNR), chaired by Jean Moulin.

September 3: Bombing by the Allies, 400 killed.

1944

April 21: Bombing of the Quartier de La Chapelle, 641 killed. On the 26th, Marshal Pétain comes to pay his respects. It is his first visit to the city since 1940.

August 19: Insurrection against the Germans. The city is liberated on the 25th.

October 30: Creation of a provisional municipal assembly. First session is in March–April of 1945.

December 18: First issue of the *Le Monde*, which replaces *Les Temps*.

1945

April 13: Ordinance to create an elected municipal council.

April 29: First municipal elections since the war. Women vote for the first time.

July 4: First grand prize of Parisian theater awarded to Jean Vilar.

September 4: Institution of social security.

1946

February 7: First "holdup," at the Crédit Lyonnais bank on the avenue Parmentier, by the "Gang des Tractions Avant," led by Pierre Loutrel, called Pierre the Insane.

February 28: First issue of the sports daily *L'Equipe*.

April 8: Nationalization of gas and electricity. Creation of the Gaz de France and the Electricité de France.

April 13: Brothels are closed.

May 25: Execution of Dr. Marcel Petiot, who killed twenty-seven people in his office on the rue Lesueur.

1947

Creation of the National Museum of Modern Art.

February 12: First haut-couture fashion show held by Christian Dior at 30, avenue Montaigne.

April 16: Creation of the new press distribution service of Paris, which has a monopoly on the diffusion of the French press.

1948

March 21: Creation of the RATP, government authority for Parisian transportation.

June 26: Inauguration of the new airport of Orly, the largest in Europe.

December 15: France's first nuclear power station, Châtillon de Zoé, begins service.

1949

March 25: First issue of *Paris-Match*.

June 29: First television newscast for the few hundred who have a television.

1950

February 11: Adoption of a minimum wage.

April 13: First issue of the weekly *L'Observateur*, subsequently *France-Observateur* and then *Le Nouvel Observateur*.

July 10: Inauguration of the port de Gennevilliers.

November 7: The first long-playing microgroove record goes on sale.

1951

May 1: Fighting between demonstrating Algerians and police during a parade.

July 6: Celebration of the Paris millennium. Reception is given for 120 mayors of major cities from around the world in the Parc de Bagatelle.

September 1: Nomination of Jean Vilar as director of the Théâtre National Populaire (TNP).

1952

Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is staged.

May 18: Demonstration of Algerians on the Champs-Élysées in favor of the independent leader Messali Hadj.

1953

Georges Braque decorates the ceiling of the Etruscan Gallery in the Louvre.

May 17: Laying of the first stone of the memorial to the unknown Jewish martyr on the rue Geoffroy-l'Asnier.

July 14: Violent fights provoked by Algerians and the Communist Party break out during the national celebrations.

1954

February 10: Decree reorganizes Les Halles and transfers the fruit and vegetable market to the Bercy station.

1955

January 1: Birth of radio station Europe Numéro Un.

1956

November 7: Violent demonstrations after the Soviet military intervention in Hungary.

1958

February 11: Decree authorizing the construction of two buildings in the wine market as an extension for the Faculty of Sciences.

March 22: Birth of the myth of the rockers with the condemning to death of two young men who committed a double murder in the Parc de Saint-Cloud.

May 19: Press conference by Charles de Gaulle at the Palais d'Orsay. After the Algerian revolt of the 13th he declares that he is prepared to take the leadership of the "government of the French Republic if the people so wish it."

June 1: Investiture of Charles de Gaulle by the National Assembly.

September 4: Charles de Gaulle presents his draft of the Constitution of the Fifth Republic at the place de la République. It is approved on the 28th.

1959

Jean-Luc Godard's film *Breathless* is released.

October 16: Mysterious failed assassination attempt on Senator François Mitterrand on the avenue de l'Observatoire at 1 A.M. The Poujadist ex-senator Presuet is implicated in what becomes known as a charade to further Mitterrand's political career.

1960

April 12: Inauguration of the first section out of Paris of the expressway du Sud.

October 3: Demonstration of veterans on the place de l'Etoile to protest against the "demonstration of the 121" of September 6, encouraging draft dodging.

1961

The first skyscraper in Paris (22 floors, 257 feet high) is erected on the rue Croulebarbe (13th arrondissement).

January 6: Beginning of bombings by the Organisation Armée Secrète (OAS).

February 24: Inauguration of the new airport of Orly.

November 3: Decree creating the Seine, Seine-et-Oise, and Seine-et-Marne districts of Paris.

1962

January 17: Seventeen bombings by the OAS in what becomes known as the "Nuit bleue."

August 4: The Malraux law provides for the creation of "preservation areas" in many cities.

1963

November 3: Laying of the first stone of the University of Nanterre.

December 4: Inauguration of the Maison de la Radio.

1964

January 13: Decision to construct a new airport at Roissy-en-France to replace Le Bourget.

September 6: First color television transmission at the Hippodrome de Longchamp.

1965

October 29: Kidnapping of the Moroccan activist Mehdi Ben Barka in front of the Brasserie Lipp. His body is never found.

1967

April 21: Last famous duel in the Bois de Boulogne, between the senators Defferre and Ribière.

November 29: Inauguration of the Paris-Lille freeway.

December 22: Inauguration of the Right Bank Expressway.

1968

March 22: First serious troubles at the University of Nanterre.

May 3: The events of "May '68" begin with intervention of the police at the Sorbonne.

May 10: Barricades on the rue Gay-Lussac and a night of rioting in the Latin Quarter.

May 13: General strike and parade of the Republic at Denfert-Rochereau.

May 27: Grenelle accords between the unions and government.

May 30: Demonstration in support of General de Gaulle on the Champs-Élysées.

July 8: Official toll of the May riots: 2,500,000 francs in damages to public highways; the fifth, sixth, and fourteenth arrondissements are declared disaster zones.

1969

February 28: Les Halles market departs for Rungis.

December 14: Inauguration of the first section of the Réseau Express Régional (RER), Nation-Boissy-Saint-Léger.

1970

January 1: The Autonomous Port of Paris created by the law of October 24, 1968.

January 20: Opening of the Paris-Rungis freeway H6.

February 20: Inauguration of the first western section of the RER, Défense-Etoile.

March 7: Opening of the Orly Ouest airport.

August 26: First demonstration of the women's organization Mouvement de Libération de la Femme (MLF) at the Arc de Triomphe in the Etoile.

November 18: Inauguration of the d'Etoile-Charles-de-Gaulle section of the RER.

1972

Michel Guy establishes the Festival d'Automne.

February 2: Opening of the Musée des Arts et Traditions Populaires in the Bois de Boulogne.

June 14: Opening of the Musée du Cinéma Henri Langlois at the Palais de Chaillot.

1973

February 6: Fire at the Edouard-Pailleron college; twenty-one die.

April 25: Completion of the last section of the perimeter boulevard.

September 13: Inauguration of the Maine-Montparnasse tower.

1974

Pierre Boulez announces the founding of the musical research institute IRCAM.

February 28: Inauguration of the Palais de Congrès at the Porte Maillot.

March 8: Inauguration of the Charles-de-Gaulle airport at Roissy.

April 4: First issue of *Quotidien de Paris*.

1975

December 31: Law reforms administration of Paris that places the city under the commune system.

1976

Creation of the Ile-de-France district.

May 28: Inauguration of the second tunnel of Saint-Cloud.

September 13: Installation of the Ecole Polytechnique at the Palaiseau.

1977

January 31: Inauguration of the Centre Georges Pompidou.

February 18: First issue of the socialist daily *Le Matin de Paris*.

March 25: Jacques Chirac is elected mayor of Paris.

December 8: Inauguration of the Châtelet–Les Halles station, RER Métro connector.

1978

March 7: Leftist “autonomes” pillage thirty-four stores along the rue La Fayette.

May 1: The “autonomes” pillage eighty-three stores.

1979

January 13: The “autonomes” sack the Quartier Saint-Lazare station.

September 4: Inauguration of the Forum of Les Halles.

1980

June 12: First terrorist attack by Action Direct. Seven wounded at the Orly airport.

1981

May 22: First Salon du Livre at the Grand Palais.

September 22: Inauguration of the high-speed train (TGV) on the Paris–Lyon line.

December 3: Inauguration of the Châtelet–Gare-de-Nord junction of the RER.

1982

June 21: First music festival, the Fête de la Musique.

September 17: Car bomb detonated in an Israeli diplomat’s car on the rue Cardinet in front of the Carnot school, wounding forty-seven people.

December 31: Law regarding the municipal organization of Paris, Lyon, and Marseille, creating elected assemblies of arrondissements.

1983

May 25: President of the Republic François Mitterrand selects Danish architect Otto von Spreckelsen to create La Défense.

July 15: Armenian terrorist attack on the Orly airport kills eight and wounds fifty-four.

November 17: Canadian architect Carlos Ott is chosen to design the Opéra de la Bastille.

1984

January 12: Inauguration of the Zénith concert hall in the Parc de La Villette.

January 22: The Grand Louvre project is awarded to Chinese-American architect Ieoh Ming Pei who designs glass pyramid.

February 3: Inauguration of the Omnisport Palace at Bercy with the Six Jours Cyclistes de Paris.

April 1: Demonstration of almost two million people in favor of freedom of education and against the suppression of private schools.

1985

January 25: Inauguration of the great hall of La Villette.

January 26: Coluche creates the Restaurants du Cœur.

May 6: Inauguration of the Géode at the Cité des Sciences and the Industrie de La Villette.

August 26: Christo wraps the Pont Neuf.

September 23: Inauguration of the Musée Picasso in the Hôtel Salé on the rue de Thorigny.

1986

Daniel Buren’s striped columns installed in the Palais Royal. Wave of terrorist attacks.

March 13: Inauguration of the Cité des Sciences and of the Industrie de La Villette.

May 4: Eleven thousand participate in the Paris Marathon.

December 1: Inauguration of the Musée d’Orsay.

1987

March 24: Contract signed for a Eurodisneyland at Marne-la-Vallée.

May 20: Inauguration of the amusement park Mirapolis at Cergy-Pontoise.

June 29: Police besiege the Iranian embassy until November 29 when Wahid Gordji, implicated in the Islamic attacks of 1986, accepts judgement of deportation to Tehran.

November 30: Inauguration of the Institut du Monde Arabe on the quai Saint-Bernard.

1988

Jean Dubuffet’s *Tour aux figures* is installed on the island of Saint-Germain.

February 7: Opening of the Vidéothèque de Paris in the Forum des Halles.

March 4: Inauguration of the pyramid in the Cour Napoléon, the entrance to the Louvre.

March 16: Inauguration of the Palais de l’Image et du Son at the palais de Tokyo.

March 21: Opening of the Robert-Debré hospital for children on the boulevard Sérurier.

March 23: Inauguration of the Centre d’Accueil et de Recherches des Archives Nationales (CARAN) on the rue des Quatre-Fils.

July 14: The president of the Republic announces the construction of a new national library.

1989

January 17: Laying of the first stone of the Grand Ecran, an audiovisual complex on the place d’Italie.

March 19: Jacques Chirac’s “grand slam” in the local elections.

March 29: Inauguration of the Grand Louvre.

May 9: Inauguration of the grand festival at the Tuileries commemorating the bicentennial of the Revolution.

June 26: Opening of the new buildings of the Ministry of Finance in Bercy.

July 13: Inauguration of the Opéra de la Bastille.

July 18: Inauguration of the Grande Arche de la Défense.

September: Inauguration of the Atlantic line of the high-speed train TGV, between Paris and Le Mans.

October 3: Opening of the Cité de la Musique in La Villette.

1990

Paris launches its summer festival, the Festival de Paris Quartiers d'Été.

January 10: The mayor presents a project aimed at reviving the prestigious image of the Champs-Élysées.

February 6: Presentation of the governmental blue book on the development of the Ile-de-France.

1991

Launching of the ZAC project to make the quay banks of the 13th arrondissement into the largest cultural center in Paris.

October 1: Inauguration of the Métro line connecting the RER station Antony to the Orly airport.

1992

The banks of the Seine, between the Sully and Iéna bridges, classified as a world heritage site by UNESCO.

April 12: Opening of Eurodisneyland in Marne-la-Vallée.

1993

May 18: Inauguration of the Paris-Lille line of the TGV.

November 20: Opening of the Richelieu wing of the Grand Louvre, which becomes the largest museum in the world.

1994

September 3: Inauguration of the new Charléty stadium.

November 13: Opening of the Roissy (Charles-de-Gaulle) station, the first in the world where passengers travel directly from airplane to train or RER.

1995

January 12: Inauguration of the Cité de la Musique.

July 25: A bomb, the work of Algerian extremists, goes off in the Saint-Michel station of the RER, killing seven and wounding eighty-four. It is followed by bombs on August 17, October 6, and October 17.

October 23: The mayors of the arrondissements belonging to the opposition of the left call for more power.

1996

Jacques Chirac announces the creation of a museum of "First Arts" (primitive African art) on the quai Branly.

March 22: First occupation of Parisian churches by illegal immigrants.

1997

August 31: Lady Diana dies in a car crash.

1998

Creation of the Forum of Images.

June 14: Declaration of the Aubry Law on the 35-hour workweek.

October 15: Inauguration of the automated Métro line Météor, linking La Madeleine to the Très Grande Bibliothèque.

2002

Opening of two new art centers, the Plateau on the rue des Alouettes and another in the west wing of the palais de Tokyo.

January 1: Adoption of the Euro.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The realization of *The Art and Spirit of Paris* is owed most of all to the unstinting support and perseverance of Robert Abrams, who conceived it in consultation with Michel Laclotte. Bob has continued to be involved through every step of creating the book, from selecting writers to closely supervising the book's design and production. The authors have shown extraordinary patience with a difficult and complex project, and we are grateful to all of them. We especially thank John Goodman, not only for his chapter on the eighteenth century, but for his graceful translations of the two previous chapters, and Gary Tinterow, for his advice and encouragement.

This book has been the work of two teams. In New York, the project was begun under the editorial eye of Nancy Grubb. Christopher Lyon saw the project to completion with determination and skill. The extraordinarily demanding production was organized and carried out with consummate professionalism by Louise Kurtz. Julietta Cheung is responsible for the lucid and graceful design of the book. Sarah Nitterauer and Laura Tepper were the tireless production coordinators, ably assisted by Amber Reed. Many thanks to Miranda Ottewell and Mary Christian, who were responsible for the principal copyediting; to Ashley Benning for proofreading and other tasks; and to Cathy Dorsey, who compiled the index. Picture research was directed successively by Elizabeth Boyle and Robin Raffer, and was concluded by Lisa Barnett and Elene Grangier.

In Paris, we first of all thank our advisor, Michel Laclotte, whose participation has been essential to the success of the project. Marike Gauthier, the publisher of Le Passage and former head of the Paris office of Abbeville Press, brought her extraordinary knowledge of French art and history to the tasks of facilitating research for the book and coordinating production of the French edition. We thank her warmly, together with Marc Phéline, who arranged for much of the book's new photography and who translated all of the English-language essays into French. Natacha Pernac carried out essential caption research and Francine Sanllorente helped with editorial tasks. At Editions du Seuil, we gratefully acknowledge Claude Cherki and Jacques Binsztok for their courage and commitment to publishing of the highest creative and scholarly standards, and we also thank Sabine Louali, Caroline Fuchs, Nathalie Beaux, Karine Louedon, and Pascale Renan-Rollin.

The illustrations are the work of many fine photographers, whose names are found in the photograph credits. We especially thank Jean-Louis Josse, who photographed many of the works of art reproduced in these pages, and Joseph Martin, who provided new photography for many of the buildings and monuments, together with his assistant, Anne Haffner. We are also grateful to Michael Schulman in the New York office of Magnum Photos.

Many other individuals and institutions contributed in ways large and small to the success of this project. We particularly thank the following:

Monseigneur Paul Abdou, Church of Saint-Julien-le-Pauvre
Monsieur Agard, Mairie de Paris, Direction des Affaires Culturelles, Bureau des Bâtiments Culturels
Mademoiselle Aragny, Church of Saint-Philippe-du-Roule
Jérôme Beau, Church of Saint-Séverin
Marine Beck-Coppola
Catherine Bellanger and Anne Dion, Musée du Louvre
Marie Bertin, Hôtel Matignon
Bibliothèque-Musée de la Comédie-Française, Service Photo
Françoise Bonnefoy, Editions du Musée du Jeu de Paume
Jean-Christophe Bonnissent, Ministère de la Culture
Odile Bordaz and Pierre Chatauret, Chapelle et Donjon de Vincennes
Sophie Boulé, Musée Carnavalet
Patrick Braouezec, Mayor of Saint-Denis
Brigitte Brauner and Séverine Rannou, Bureau des Attachés de Presse, Mairie de Paris: Parcs et Jardins
Rachel Brishoual, Musée des Arts Décoratifs
Daniel Buren and Sophie Streefkerk

Jean-Pierre Chauvet, Musée Picasso
 Denis Conus, Service de l'Administration et de la Conservation des Résidences Présidentielles,
 Présidence de la République
 Jean-Pierre Daly and Colonel Ferrandis, Val-de-Grâce
 Madame Christine Dap, Sorbonne, Division de l'Intendance
 Carole Darmouni, UNESCO
 Guy-Patrice Dauberville, Galerie Bernheim Jeune
 Pierre Daumard and Marie-Véronique Clin, Musée d'Histoire de la Médecine / École de Chirurgie
 Dominique Daura and Saïda Sfifa, Centre National des Monuments Historiques et des Sites
 Véronique Delavenne, Galerie Adrien Maeght
 Père Pierre-Marie Delfieux, Church of Saint-Gervais-Saint-Protais, Communauté Monastique de Jérusalem
 François Delhumeau, Mairie de Paris
 Monique Delon and Isabelle Chalet, Conciergerie
 Muriel Denis
 Madame Depaz, Hôtel des Invalides
 Monsieur Jean Derens and Madame Claude Billaud, Bibliothèque Historique de la Ville de Paris
 Monsieur Desportes, Madame Sophie Semblat-Walhain, and Madame Courtois,
 Cathedral of Notre-Dame-de-Paris
 Monsieur le Grand Chancelier de la Légion d'Honneur, Général Jean-Philippe Douin,
 Musée de la Légion d'Honneur
 Françoise Ducos, Etablissement Public du Parc et de la Grande Halle de la Villette
 Père Jean-Pascal Duloisy, Church of Notre-Dame-des-Victoires
 Père Dupuis, Église des Carmes / Institut Catholique
 Monsieur l'Abbé Durozoy, Church of Saint-Eustache
 Monsieur Fabry and Madame Lopez, SCI de l'Hôtel Amelot de Bisseuil et de l'Hôtel de la Païva
 Madame Isabelle Féral, Bibliothèque du Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers
 Michel Fleury, Madame Hérault, Jean-Luc Godard, and Christian Rapa, Commission du Vieux Paris
 Nathalie Froissart, Maison de la Catalogne
 Monsieur l'Abbé Emmanuel Furci, Church of Saint-Pierre de Montmartre
 Galerie Charles et André Bailly
 Benoit Gassiot-Talabot, Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Photothèque
 Alain Gheerbrandt
 Père Nicolas Guiollot, Church of Magny-en-Vexin
 Gracianne Harismendy, Editions Hermann
 Viviane Huchard, Musée National du Moyen Age
 Madame Iafrate, Hôtel Lambert
 Monsieur l'Abbé Robert Jorens, Church of Saint-Germain-des-Prés
 Madame Kabadayan and Véronique Garrigues, Société des Auteurs dans les Arts Graphiques
 et Plastiques (ADAGP)
 Monsieur Lacour and François de Coustin, Banque de France
 Madame Lafargue, Musée Cognacq-Jay
 Adjudant-Chef Lantoine and Jean-François Bureau, Ministère de la Défense, Ecole Militaire,
 Département Médias
 Béatrice Letellier, Crédit Lyonnais
 Madame Lucas, Catherine Escrivan, and Madame Béatrice Robin, Chapelle de Port-Royal,
 Hôpital Cochin-Saint-Vincent-de-Paul
 Dominique Ménager, Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris
 Bernard Notare, Palais-Royal
 Madame Olivet, CHU Necker-Enfants Malades
 Monseigneur d'Ornellas and Madame Magali Ruffier, Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Cathédrale
 Jean-Pierre Pelissier, SCI du Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Stéphane Petkof, Musée Nissim de Camondo
 Yves Peyré and Madame Dilmi, Bibliothèque littéraire Jacques Doucet
 André Pichery and Joël Moro, Mairie de Paris, Service Audiovisuel
 Françoise Portelance, Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts
 Madame Refouil, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève
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 Jean-Pierre Samoyault and Madame Bersany, Mobilier National
 Serge Santos, Père Bernard Jean Berger, Branislav Brankovic, and Madame Vaudour,
 Basilica of Saint-Denis
 Madame Ariane Sarazin, Musée de l'Histoire de France / Archives Nationales
 Bernard Tschumi
 Bernard Valade, Encyclopædia Universalis
 Laurence Vaugeois, La Géode
 Madame Dina Vierny, Fondation Dina Vierny
 Jacques Vilain, Annie-Claude Demagny, and Vincent Brocvielle, Musée Rodin
 Père Viole and Père Paul Quinson, Chapelle Saint-Aignan
 Jean-Marc de Virieu and Anne Saulay, Sénat, Palais du Luxembourg
 Arielle Weintraub, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire du Judaïsme
 Michael L. Wilson, University of Texas at Dallas

We also thank the curés, vicars, sacristans, and volunteers of the parish churches of Paris and all those who generously opened their homes to our photographers.

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 Scala—Art Resource: FIG. 2.44, 2.115, 4.1, 4.133, 5.12, 6.63, 6.85, 6.123, 8.58
 Ernest Scheidegger/Neue Zürcher Zeitung—Alberto Giacometti Foundation, Zurich: FIGS. 8.76, 8.77
 Patrice Schmidt/Musée des Arts Décoratifs: FIG. 7.49
 P. Schmidt/Réunion des Musées Nationaux—Art Resource, NY: FIG. 6.32
 Jean Schorman/Réunion des Musées Nationaux—Art Resource, NY: FIGS. 4.110, 5.3, 7.75, 8.73
 Fritz von der Schulenburg/The Interior Archive LTD: FIGS. 5.40, 5.43
 SEF—Art Resource, NY: FIG. 3.74
 Snark—Art Resource, NY: FIG. 8.29
 Stadtkasse Mannheim: FIG. 9.48
 Stallsworth, Lee: FIG. 8.121
 Edward Steichen/Bibliothèque Nationale: FIG. 7.120
 Studio Chevojon: FIG. 7.13
 Successió Miró, Paris/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris: FIGS. 8.30, 8.71, 9.28
 Succession H. Matisse, Paris—Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York: FIGS. 7.93, 7.97, 7.98, 7.102, 7.103, 7.160, 8.6, 8.46, 8.50
 Svartz/Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris: FIG. 1.4
 Swedish National Art Museums: FIG. 4.148
 Swiss National Library: FIG. 7.9
 M. Tarica, Paris: FIG. 8.125
 Tate Gallery, London/Art Resource, NY: FIGS. 5.81, 8.74, 8.82, 9.32, 9.38, 9.43
 Jean Testard/Galerie Vallotton, Lausanne: FIG. 7.83
 Thyssen-Bornemisza Foundation, Lugano, Switzerland: FIG. 4.48
 Jean-François Tomasian/Réunion des Musées Nationaux—Art Resource, NY: FIG. 8.105; Toumazet/Photothèque des Musées de la Ville de Paris: FIG. 5.88
 Roger Van Reeth/Bridgeman Art Library International: FIG. 9.121
 Malcolm Varon, New York: FIGS. 7.6, 7.81
 Victoria & Albert Museum, London/Art Resource, NY: FIGS. 4.14, 7.117, 8.96
 Collection Roger Viollet: FIGS. 6.106, 7.3, 7.54, 7.106, 8.25, 8.27, 8.28, 8.127, 9.13, 9.14, 9.15, 9.16, 9.17, 9.18
 Elke Walford, Fotowekstatt/Hamburger Kusthalle: FIGS. 4.223, 6.73, 6.121, 7.158
 Peter Willi/Centre des Monuments Nationaux, Paris: FIG. 9.56
 Peter Willi/Réunion des Musées Nationaux—Art Resource, NY: FIG. 2.147, 5.35
 Yale collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library: FIG. 7.105

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